

A·HALF·CENTVRY·IN·SALEM

BY·M·C·D·SILSBEE



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A HALF CENTURY IN SALEM

BY

M. C. D. SILSBEE



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SEVENTEEN years ago I wrote a paper, with the title of "Old Salem," which I read one evening to the members of the Ladies' Social Club in Boston. Subsequently I was asked to repeat it in small parties, at which sundry venerable gentlemen joined the young and middle-aged of my audience, to listen to the story of departed days. A few years later I gave it under the same title to a paper published for the benefit of a Salem fair, but it was in many respects altered, as trivial personalities in a private parlor would be impertinent liberties in print.

With sundry changes and additions, I have at last done what has been so long deferred, and I offer my little book for the amusement of friends who may not be averse to refreshing their memories with harmless gossip. But now a question of propriety arises that is not quite easy to meet. In some instances names may

be used without fear of giving offense, in others it may be doubtful, and I can only promise to be as discreet as possible, disarming censure by asking pardon beforehand for any possible annoyance.





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OLD LETTERS

IN the early days of this century the sun did not shine on a more prosperous town than Salem. The East India trade had opened the avenue on which indomitable merchants strode with rapid steps to wealth and honor. Derbys, Peabodys, Dodges, Pickmans, Wests, Crowninshields, Forrester's, Grays, Silsbees, and probably many others were amassing fortunes more or less splendid. Forests of masts rose at the Derby and Crowninshield wharves; the men worked with a will, and their wives and daughters aided them by a wise economy. Side by side with this healthy prosperity flourished the political differences which often severed friendships and nourished animosities, and although Salem may not have been more bitter than other places of its size, doubtless the gall was poured into the wine of life in liberal measure. Republicans and

Early prosperity of Salem.

Politics.

"Trifles
light as
air."

Federalists could not take the same newspaper, could not dance in the same ball-room, and it would seem, from a glance at localities, could hardly live in the same part of the town ; but through all this obvious hindrance to general social development we know that Salem girls were bright and lovely, and Salem men, as a class, upright and intelligent. For the gossip from 1802 to 1806 I must depend on some old yellow letters, written on the coarse square sheet of the period, with ink faded by the progress of over eighty years ; and I find by a careful examination that, although in themselves interesting, they do not contain much that is suited to the pages of a book. The letters were addressed to a young girl in Marblehead, and the pockets of obliging friends, or the stage-coach driven by Thompson, were the means of communication between Salem and the neighboring town. They are full of girlish enthusiasm, warm affection for her associates, and deep interest in home life ; but I will select only passages to show the amusements of the young folks of the period. As there is but one survivor of the *dramatis personæ*, who was then a little child, I shall give names

at full length and avoid the obscurity of initials.

I like to think that the young letter-writer was a good dancer according to the fashion of the time, as she figured in the sailor's hornpipe at Turner's dancing-school. She will tell us about the gay parties that abounded in sober Salem; and I find a description of a summer evening's festivities at the house of the rich merchant, Mr. William Gray, who built and occupied the brick mansion in Essex Street, known afterwards as the Essex Coffee House, still later as the Essex House. "Our party at Lucia Gray's was pleasanter than could have been expected at this season; we had a good deal to eat and to drink, and considerable conversation, and to crown all we closed the evening with a reel to the music of the piano. I had Leverett Saltonstall for my partner, a sensible, agreeable, good-natured soul, and to be sure, in spite of the heat, we jigged it away most merrily." Mr. Saltonstall was probably at the time a law student in Salem; he certainly retained through life the qualities alluded to, and although reels disappeared in the progress of events, he never ceased to enjoy a quadrille. In

*A gay dance
with a pleasant partner.*

another letter we are told that "the beautiful, accomplished, and unaffected Mrs. Richard Derby passed Wednesday evening with us. What an honor conferred on our house, and yet her carriage was not that of a superior. Mr. John Pickering was pleased to appropriate to her Burke's description of Marie Antoinette, the unfortunate consort of Louis XVI., and she richly deserves the highest praise that can be given to a lovely woman." Here is an extract to which the explanation of a few words, used in a sense now obsolete, may be of service : a dance was a contra-dance when it was not a reel ; a voluntary was one for which the gentlemen were at liberty to engage their partners ; a draw-dance was a sort of lottery — the ladies and gentlemen each had numbers, and might or might not be especially pleased with their luck. And now for the letter. "We have had a little ball at Lucia Gray's — dances all voluntary, not a very judicious arrangement for Salem. I wore a new dress made for the occasion, and had ample leisure, before going in to the dancing room, to criticise the pretty drapery of Miss Martha West while sipping a preliminary cup of tea. Mr. John Pickering in-

*Courtesy of
a courteous
gentleman.*

*The ball
at Lucia
Gray's.*

vited me for the first voluntary ; I had the pleasure of sitting still the second ; my partner for the third was Mr. Prince, fourth, Henry Pickering, fifth, John Stone, sixth, Mr. Swett, seventh and last, Mr. White."

It requires a vivid fancy to change into young gallants the middle-aged or old gentlemen who have helped make life pleasant, or who perhaps have acquired a solidity of manner that renders it difficult to believe they ever wanted to have a good time. I did not know Mr. Swett until he had reached his eightieth year, and the eccentricity that prompted "mad speeches," doubtless amusing enough at his future wife's "little ball," had settled down into mere mannerism. As an octogenarian he was courteous and considerate ; he brought me several minor poems written and illustrated by his gifted grand-daughter, Fanny Alexander, and probably I am indebted for many civilities to the remembrance of his gay partner.

The next extract cannot fail to be interesting to all who have partaken of hospitalities in the charming house belonging to the South Salem Derbys : "To attempt a description of all our various routs would

The beginning and the end.

Two handsome parties.

be presumption. A ball and supper at Mrs. Putnam's were most elegant, but Mrs. Hersey Derby's was preëminent in splendor of decorations and music. There were four rooms open for the reception of company, above sixty dancers, and a superb service of cut glass, even to the very plates we ate from. The table was in the form of a crescent, ornamented with a great variety of exotic plants; our fare consisted of cold ham and tongue, jellies, whips, custards, creams, blanc mange, tarts, puddings, cheese-cakes, grapes, nuts, almonds, cakes of every variety, and confectionery. Our attendants were numerous, and everything conducted with ease and propriety." A great deal of the beautiful glass is still in existence, and Dr. Hasket Derby, oculist, of Boston, is the fortunate possessor; he received it by the will of his cousins, the Misses Derby, and it may add a little to the pleasure of ownership to know that it is not only handsome but historical, being mentioned in a young lady's letter early in the century, and referred to by an old lady only fourteen years before its close. "I can tell you of a party at my brother's, at Mrs. S. Tucker's, Mrs. Bowditch's, Eliza Orne's, Mrs. Cushing's, Mrs.

*A bill of
fare.*

*Rich spoils
of time.*

Sam'l Derby's, Miss Martha West's, besides two at our own house, and I attended nearly all of them. Judge then of my occupations ; great assiduity is necessary to repair the inroads made by these dissipations on our more important work and duties, and I am on the point of running off to Danvers to recover my sober senses." The next is not strictly puritanical, but there is enough human nature to make it attractive: "Our good Dr. Prince is so obliging as to have no meeting to-day, from indisposition, I imagine. Could I separate the cause from the effect, I would heartily rejoice, but the common dictates of humanity forbid my exulting in the infirmities of so amiable a being as our pastor."

Yet she seems to find it easy to turn to secular affairs, and the letter is in part devoted to an account of one of the public assemblies, so she asks, "Has the rumor of our ball at Palmer's reached you? I was at the top of Fortune's wheel, answered to No. 2 in the draw-dances, with Saltonstall, Swett, and cousin Henry Pickering for my partners. My voluntaries were, two with cousin Dudley Pickman, one with John Stone, one with cousin Henry, and

*From grave
to gay.*

one with K., who thinks himself an Adonis. We supped at eleven, a true Yankee feast, — more ducks, chickens, chicken pies, ham, tongue, coffee, bread and butter than would feed a nation, — but I suppose it is very anti-republican to abuse the hospitalities of my countrymen, unless I choose to prefer the frogs of sister France.”

These early Salem assemblies were held at the rooms in Federal Street, afterwards altered to a charming dwelling-house and occupied by Judge Putnam, whose family filled through many years an important part in our social life, and left a corresponding gap when it went among the first pioneers of the second exodus to Boston.

Philanthropy out of fashion in modern times.

During the winter season these balls were sufficiently numerous to satisfy the merry young people, and seem to have been conducted on principles of philanthropy which might well amaze the more selfish elegance of a modern ball-room. The evening's amusement began at six o'clock. First in order came the draw-dances, that were to give every person present two or three opportunities to share in the pleasure for which they helped to pay. The manager, arrayed in black coat and knee-breeches, voluminous white neck-cloth, silk stock-

Autocrat of the ball-room.

ings and pumps, standing where all eyes might fix themselves in deferential gaze, called in sonorous voice "number one, a lady," and number one took her place at the head of the room, a little anxious about "number one, a gentleman," who, on being summoned, took his stand opposite the lady, and soon the lines were filled. At a stamp of that trimly dressed foot the music struck up, and away went the head couple. Dancers danced in these times, *Dancers who danced.* and it would not be easy for even an active imagination to picture the agility and dexterity with which feet and legs were used. Traditions have floated down to us of brisk young gentlemen occasionally bounding into chairs, and the pirouettes, flic-flacs, and pigeon wings introduced into the perpetual motion of an old-fashioned contra-dance made a sight worth seeing. After the draw-dances came the voluntaries, reels, and contra-dances in due proportion, and the stately grace of the minuet tempering gayety with a dash of dignity. The lady at the head of the long line called the dance, and when our letter-writer ordered "Drops of Brandy," it appeared that nobody but herself and her partner from Boston had ever tasted the seductive potion. The mu- *"Drops of Brandy."*

*A pretty
dress, still
in good
preservation.*

sic was peculiar and the figures were intricate, and as they could get no aid they went through them on their own responsibility, while the others looked on and doubtless thought it an audacious proceeding. The dress worn on this occasion was an extremely scant gold muslin with a very short waist, long kid gloves nearly meeting the sleeves, which were not much to speak of, and yellow kid slippers, round-toed and slashed on the instep. A comfortable supper was usually served at ten o'clock; at midnight the revelers went home, and were probably sound asleep long before the hour at which the main interest of modern parties commences. One other party is alluded to, but it evidently did not please. Her partners for the draw-dances were not to her taste, and I will suppress their names.

*An "outing"
and a return.*

Letters were seldom dated, but in February, 1802, we read the moral reflections of the writer, at the age of seventeen, on the difference between town and semi-country life: "After four weeks' dissipation in Boston, I am once more safely returned to my peaceful, happy home. It is ingratitude to say I do not love the metropolis, for its hospitality to me demands my utmost praise, yet I would not

live there. Nature is discarded from their society, and gorgeous fashion reigns in her stead. I, who have been used to a free government, cannot bow to the decrees of the mutable deity."

Does anybody know what a "village bonnet" was? The young lady has just made a purchase of "the prettiest, most simple little thing that ever woman wore." It was probably bought with reference to the grand coming event, when all the bright faces would like to be adorned in the most bewitching manner, for it was a notable day in the annals of Salem. "The day after to-morrow will be the anniversary of the East India Marine Society, and you must certainly come over in the morning and go with us to see the procession; it is better worth attention than a dozen trainings. There will be a complete Mandarin figure on exhibition, the Palanquin, and all the officers dressed in Chinese gowns, fine music, and everything that can add to the interest."

Novel entertainment.

With a touch of Federal politics, the extracts from the letters will come to an end. "I am writing on a great book, placed as usual on my lap, and, sitting at the window, my attention is frequently attracted

*Triumph of
Mr. Crown-
inshield, an
excellent
man.*

by external objects, so that I make little progress. Besides, we are in the midst of electioneering, *alias* trying to rout you Democrats, for I could not help joining a friend of mine in the wish that the morning's town-meeting bell might be the har-binger of Mr. Crowninshield's political exit. But you are so indefatigable in a bad cause that there is little chance for us. If I am saucy I give you leave to return the compliment ; you may even join Carleton in abusing my uncle Pickering, though, like him, I suspect you will discover nothing amiss but that he eats turnips and holds the plough." This letter, like all the others, was addressed to a niece of Elbridge Gerry. Marblehead was then, as it is now, the stronghold of Democracy, and the opportunity of a good-natured hit could not be neglected by a niece of Timothy Pickering.

The old yellow papers will now be laid carefully aside, perhaps never to be looked at again. The writer who exulted in prosperity, a loving, happy home, and health so perfect as to call for constant gratitude, was in ten years from the last date, 1806, a confirmed invalid ; but cheerful resignation took the place of high spirits ; the unselfish

heart never taxed the sympathies of those with whom, so far as was possible, she kept her place as a kind and cordial friend. Conversation, that she liked so much and in which she was acknowledged to be most delightful, was often from necessity relinquished; but to the utmost extent of diminishing strength she availed herself of the possibilities of enjoyment. To deep religious feeling she added a philosophy that kept her calm and self-reliant in every trial. A wise and efficient household guide, she ruled it with firm and gentle sway, and she was ably described in a few words by the elder Dr. Peirson, who, although not our family physician, made her occasional friendly visits: "Mrs. D—— is an alive woman."





THE HOMES OF SALEM

*Retrospec-
tion.*



WOMAN who can look back through a large part of the present century and remember a great many of the distinctive marks of life in Salem, during her fifty years of residence, is at least qualified by right of seniority to talk about "the good old times." And they were emphatically good old times ; times of respectability, of comfort, of honest toil and elegant leisure, of steady thrift, of modest charities. Moderate times they were, knowing little excess, admitting of no extraordinary action, but so pleasant, so genial, so real, that I would fain describe to the young folks of nowadays the ancestry which gave a certain significance to Salem by the occupations of their industrious, methodical lives, the distinguished characters who made it a noted little place, and the numerous oddities who added piquancy to the daily food of life. Where shall I begin ? At the be-

ginning, and tell all about it? Well, then, so I will, and let me promise that my story shall be strictly true; and even if the half is not worth recounting, it has been and happened in some nook of the snug town before and after it grew up to a city.

The old homes! how many hallowed memories cluster around these words! A home was a home then, a place to be born in, to live in, and to die in, and, if fate so ordained, to be married from. And a day was a day then, beginning at six o'clock in summer, and at half past seven in winter, and usually ending at ten, at which time the sober household was ready for the night's rest.

As I am not romancing, only describing, I must confess that vast discomforts were borne with stoicism because they were inevitable. All through the long, severe winter we were cold as a matter of course, excepting the side next to the glowing wood fire, and that was scorched; the entries and sleeping-rooms were probably at freezing point, ice in the water pitchers, unmelting frost on the windows. But the roaring fires were built up in the spacious cavities with back log, back stick and fore stick, split wood and cat stick, chips for

*Realities
of life.*

*Torrid and
Frigid zones.*

kindling, with big bellows to blow the flame, and who cared for cold? In those far-off days punctuality headed the list of domestic virtues; establishments were not large, two or three at the utmost constituting the forces. We kept helps then; sometimes they were hindrances, addicted to occasional sauciness, especially if they were good, and nobody in the parlor would have been bold enough to interfere materially in the woman's rights of the kitchen. Still, Yankee help was an admirable institution, and when it was judiciously managed it gave large returns of love and service. The family all met at the breakfast table in winter at eight o'clock, and very cozy and appetizing was the morning meal. As there were no nerves then, coffee was a licensed drink; as dyspepsia was an unacknowledged sin, hot bread cakes, rye grid-dle cakes, or indian-meal johnny cake, smoking from its board, and drop cakes baked on the brick floor of the oven, were abundantly supplied, while the few who did not choose slow poison indulged in spread or dip toast. Not all at once, but from this variety selections were made. Milk and honey flowed for the children, and to this day I never see a bee without thinking

*Love and
service.*

*"Evil, be
thou my
good."*

of the grocery store round Buffum's corner from which the up-town supplies were obtained. Breakfast over, the next duty was to fit ourselves for the outer world : wadded hoods, long tippets, knit mittens, carpet moccasins, woolen overcoats, for the girls ; with a difference for the boys of greased boots, ugly beaver hats, or knit caps shaped like a pudding bag. Then came the fun of sliding in the wide gutters all the way to school (there was a glare of ice in front of Miss Becky Cabot's fine old house), or plodding through deep snow banks which buried us up to our heads ; but only boys were permitted by public opinion to drag sleds, and the sole girl of the period who dared so to do was called " Tom-boy," by way of showing the superior good manners of the numerous critics. At one o'clock dinner was served in reverse order : first the pudding, then the meat, and as the children were obliged to be in the school-room again at two o'clock there was no time for dessert, and the fruit was disposed of at odd seasons. At six the pleasant tea, or supper, as it was usually called, was spread ; and when the " second girl " had cleared the table, a happy group quickly surrounded it, while

*Appropriate
toilets.*

*At a Federal
dinner, pud-
ding came
first, while
the Demo-
crats began
with the
meat.*

books, work, games, slates and pencils, with a dish of rosy apples, furnished the occupations of the evening. The light of other days did not shine on distant corners ; two handsome plated lamps glimmer in memory, until a few years later they were displaced by an astral,—and the winter's day of Salem was ended.

*Happy
reveries.*

I sometimes fancy that my brain must be brimful of small photographs, such vivid little pictures rise to view when I am sitting alone and thinking, as old folks do, of the time of bright sunshine and rosy afterglow, when such lovely rainbows came on the drops shed by childish eyes that a sorrow only made the joy that came next it still brighter by its contrast ; and although ministers now and then preached about the trials of life and melancholy pessimists groaned about a “vale,” we were firm in the conviction that we should always emerge in triumph from the one and tread on flowers as we journeyed through the other. Happy were the little feet that walked in Salem, free to wander up and down the shady streets, out in the green lanes, and through the trim gardens ; blessed were the young lives so protected by watchful love, doubtless within

somewhat narrow limits, but with no desire to stray beyond them. And who shall say that the existence apportioned to the elders, so equipoised in pleasure and duty, was not as worthy approval as the more brilliant achievements of the present era?

The "day of small things" was comparatively guiltless of omissions, for everything might be done when there was not too much to do. If there were not many self-sacrificing mortals, ready to devote the larger part of their time to taking charge of all members of the human family who did not belong to their division, it can be said in extenuation of their shortcomings that there was not then a large number of poor or naughty folks in the community, and with some aid and a little setting to rights they usually managed to take care of themselves. Women were mostly limited to Mrs. Whitney's mass meetings of two; and let me say that two clear-headed and warm-hearted women are often as useful as two dozen. Their gracious kindnesses were never omitted, and usually children were taught that by making others happy they assured their own happiness; so on Election Day they were sent with cake to some old dependent or

*Committees a
modern in-
vention.*

reduced gentlewoman, and at the season of Thanksgiving pies and puddings were taken by the same messengers. Charities were judicious, benevolence was ever watchful, the few societies were wisely conducted, and by giving needed assistance in season importunate begging was easily forestalled.

A woman's mission.

I think that a peculiar mission was making sunshine in shady places of the house. Always at hand when wanted, always busy in the right hours, they could wash the glass, china, and silver of the breakfast-table, help to make cake and preserves in the kitchen, and dust nicely whatever could not be trusted to less careful hands. So when household duties were done, they were ready to take their seat in the parlor, with a basket of mending or sewing on the pretty work table, a book, perhaps the last Scott's novel, perhaps an "Edinburgh Review," lying in close neighborhood; and I do not believe there was a pleasanter sight in the world than a Salem mistress of a family through the afternoon and evening.

A portrait.

Social intercourse was delightful, as there were readers, thinkers, and plenty of good talkers. Invitations were not written, but sent by domestics, or more frequently by

the children of the family. The average size of an evening party was from thirty to fifty guests ; they began to arrive at seven, and to go at ten. York Morris, the stout colored waiter, handed with a dexterity peculiar to himself the large trays of tea and coffee, pound and sponge cake, and milk biscuits, and the ladies, with those gentlemen who chose to come early, did ample justice to the feast. The majority of the latter wandered in from their offices at half past eight or nine, in season for the whips and creams, Madeira and Sangaree. The ladies sat round the room in a circle, the gentlemen moving about, pausing in front of those with whom they wished to converse, or perhaps getting a chance at a chair or a seat on the sofa. Conversation was general whenever the assembly was small enough to admit of it, — a *tête-à-tête* would have been impossible, — keen wit, good-natured argument, and sound sense never flagged. Men liked to visit, and took a laudable pride in making themselves as delightful as possible. There was John Pickering, lawyer and philologist, polished in manner, courteous of address, ready for the occasion ; Henry Pickering, refined in taste even to fastidiousness, poetic in

The first waiter on record.

Well-known gentlemen.

*Well-known
gentlemen.*

nature, with the soul of an artist and heart of a true gentleman ; Leverett Saltonstall, intelligent, musical, generous, and cordial ; Nathaniel Saltonstall, full of drollery, kindly to all, and the special favorite of the young folks ; Dudley L. Pickman, keen as a Damascus blade, faithful in friendship, and an absolute genius in financial affairs ; Judge White, who devoted the leisure hours of his professional life to the reading and study that made him so desirable a companion ; Pickering Dodge, the busy merchant, always in a hurry, never stopping to rest, whose quaint speeches doubled themselves in oddity because, like Charles Lamb, he uttered them through the medium of slight hesitancy of speech ; Judge Putnam, friendly and honorable, with open hearted and handed hospitality ; Ben Merrill, the witty bachelor, whose occupation, apart from his law office, was to supply jokes and puns for the community ; John G. King, scholarly and intellectual ; Colonel Pickman, gentleman of the old school ; Humphrey Devereux, whose mind, enriched by foreign travel, was further matured by culture in the college he so dearly loved ; Dr. Bowditch, with a charming simplicity equaled only by his great learning ;

Timothy Pickering, the friend of Washington, the Revolutionary soldier, the upright statesman, incapable of a low sentiment or a mean action. Many others there were, as well versed in the amenities of life, — Silsbees, Crowninshields, Barstows, Peabodys, Derbys, Whites, and Judge Story. *Other honored names.* Some of these gentlemen were noted for the dinner parties at which the heads of government, distinguished politicians, and members of foreign diplomatic corps were often entertained ; while the great balls, for which they not infrequently opened their houses, were much enjoyed by the numerous guests. Among these honored names, those of Judge Story and Hon. Nathaniel Silsbee are entitled to especial mention for the high position attained by both in public life. Judge Story left Salem before his great powers had reached their zenith, and his departure was much regretted by his adopted city, which borrowed him from Marblehead, and then lent him to Cambridge. Mr. Silsbee, whose long life was passed in his birthplace, earned the respectful regard of his fellow-citizens as well as the entire confidence of all his political associates during the many years in which, as Representative

and Senator, he served his country with faithful ability.

There was a certain urbane stateliness in the manners of the elder ladies from which they seldom departed, and it was well that the acknowledged leaders of society should have authority to temper any excess of vivacity in the young folks. Who could ignore the presence of a lady attired in her party gown of crimson merino and turban of the same color, or in sober silk, with embroidered collar trimmed with costly thread lace and brow wreathed with snowy muslin? Yet these dignified dames seldom wore their starch too stiff, and if, as I suppose, their stockings were a little blue, the decorous length of the petticoats prevented undue display. The few who liked to revive their youthful pleasures or look on at the enjoyment of the young people could take their place in occasional quadrille and contra-dance, or sit in velvet and laces on the not very comfortable benches at Hamilton Hall, as honored and welcome guests. Those who once shone in that society are all gone but one, who will remember what I have tried to recall; most of them died in the abounding wealth of virtue, intellect, and

*Our pride
and our
pleasure.*

household worth, while a few lived on to happy old age, — all leaving to us the precious memory of Salem's daughters, as they existed, loving and beloved, so many years ago.

*Salem's
daughters.*





THE CHILDREN'S JOYS AND SORROWS



AND now the children must take their turn again, or they will not have time to grow up before their sketches are finished. When the cold weather was, by a polite fiction, done with and laid aside for next winter's use, there came a short period of superfluous discomfort. Early in May the andirons, shovel, and tongs were relegated to the garret, the woolen clothes either given away or shut up in spare closet drawers, and the daughters were made happy in new calicoes for school and white cambrics for Sundays, or wretched in the last summer's dresses with a tuck let down; for short gowns would not have been tolerated, and the innocent black legs seen on the streets at the present day would have shocked the moral sense of the community. The sons were usually found to have put the finishing touches to the last year's

*Method in
madness.*

garments, so the hen-tailor, Martha Stevens, came to the house to fit them out for the summer's campaign ; the sight of her press-board and the smell of her hot iron were an abomination to my eyes and an offense in my nostrils. We, the girls, exulted in Sally Floyd, the best and most deliberate of dress-makers : we threaded needles, handed pins, stitched up breadths ; yet, with all our assistance, the process was slow as the effect was sure ; but when a gown was finished, it was in its simple way perfection. What would she have thought of the generous cutting and slashing of our fashionable modistes ? Her economical scissors never went an inch too far, her basting threads were used again and again (to be sure, her efficient aids took them out and wound them), and her pins were not scattered on the floor to be picked up by anybody who wanted a supply. She was a quaint little figure, in the low sewing-chair, neat as a Quakeress, with smooth gray hair and a very original turban ; to the good sense of a judicious dress-maker she added the simplicity of a child and a bit of harmless vanity, for she confessed that she thought her hair "a kind of pretty." She did not imagine that she

*Helping
hands.*

*A wise econ-
omy.*

was a half century in advance of the fashion, or that her memory would be so long preserved by those who profited by her faithful services.

On May morning we went a-maying, probably bringing home bad colds with the few pale flowers ; but the pleasant season was coming, and we could wait for it with patience. The school vacation and Election Day were times of bliss ; in every well-regulated family a large batch of election cake was made, and what was not sent to the favored few who relied on foreign supplies was sure to be eaten before it had a chance to dry. Some of the Salem families migrated to Andover the last week of May, where at Mrs. Ballard's boarding-house the young folks had a delightful time. The house was small but comfortable, the closet under the stairs was full of loaf cake and gingerbread, and the table was amply supplied with good bread, fresh butter, thick cream, and such drop cakes as were never seen in any other place ; if my memory serves me aright, it was all to be had for three or four dollars a week. The Shawsheen, then unspoiled by factories, was a never-failing attraction ; the mill could be visited, and Pomp's pond was the

*The money's
worth of
fun.*

grand resort for a gala day. A four-legged animal, belonging to the husband of the ruling potentate, did duty as a horse, which, with a shabby old chaise, could be hired by any girl who would undertake to poke him with a parasol or lash him with the reins into the semblance of a trot, but his taste was decidedly in favor of a walk. Old Timothy Ballard was looked on as a rich man, although, being of a modest nature, he disclaimed the justice of the charge; and when he was asked who paid the largest tax in the place replied in few but significant words, "Them that don't oughter." A few years ago I saw the house from a distance. I knew it was small; then it looked to me absolutely diminutive; but whatever the number of feet and inches, a huge quantity of fun could be packed within its walls in the Salem vacations.

Child life was doubtless monotonous, but we did not expect much variety, and found our happiness within doors.

"Home was our world, our throne a mother's knee,
Our crown her smile bent on us lovingly;"

and the rare pleasure of an outing was doubled in telling all its delights on coming back. Summer amusements were scarce: there was Columbine Hill to climb, the

graceful flowers that nodded in the June breeze to be plucked, and the great pastures to wander over, that were as pleasant to us as they seem to be to the Salem poetess who has written charming verses in their praise. The lovely gardens of friends were an occasional treat, and I was given the freedom, but not the flowers, of a few; either cowardice or honesty kept my hands from the stalks of sweet-william, pinks, bluebells, or larkspur, and I fear that I was sorry it was wicked to break the eighth commandment. But one garden blooms in never-fading beauty; many a fair-haired hyacinth made me a happy child, and as for the bed of periwinkles, it was at my service to help myself. I loved flowers, but I worshiped beauty, and I remember how I ran home one afternoon, almost breathless (I seldom walked), to tell the family I had seen such a pretty lady dressed in a green silk gown, and that she looked just like a rose in its green leaves. It still keeps its sweetness, but I see a white rose now.

The old garden.

It was either in 1817 or 1818 that a steamboat was advertised to arrive at Salem on a certain day and to take passengers for an excursion in the harbor. Very

few of the inhabitants had ever seen an out-pour of steam larger than that issuing from the Frenchman's locomotive, when he proposed a journey on his own big tea-kettle. A home party was planned, and the driver, who did not often do anything to-day that could be deferred to the morrow, was as usual late in his movements. Old Charley was coaxed to his utmost speed, the wharf reached in a mingled state of hope and fear, and the expectant voyagers saw the steamer making its way without them. But the disappointment was one of the many blessings in disguise; the sea was rough, and the excursionists soon had ample reason to wish themselves on the solid land. As a slight compensation a drive to Topsfield Hotel, where friends were boarding, was proposed. The day was hot, the road dusty; we behaved like young philosophers, yet we had to make believe very hard that we were having a good time, and did not succeed in deceiving ourselves even if we solaced the mortified driver.

An excursion under difficulties.

Toward the end of the last century, when my letter-writer was a very young girl, she was among the children who saw George Washington, who helped to receive him in

*La Fayette
in Salem.*

their pretty white dresses, and heard that most perfect of greetings from Abijah Northey, selectman: "Friend Washington, I am glad to see thee, and in the name of the inhabitants of Salem I give thee a hearty welcome." The children of 1824 saw La Fayette in a pouring rain, but still they could peep at him through the drops and be thankful. There was a chapter of accidents at the dividing line between Marblehead and Salem, where the escort was to take him from the enthusiastic people who had been his entertainers; it was nobody's fault, perhaps, although everybody's misfortune; but at last the aids galloped into place, the procession formed, and through thousands of half-frantic people it made its way to the bridge, where two hundred sailors in neat uniform greeted the nation's guest with hearty cheers. Arches wreathed with flowers, covered with inscriptions impossible to be read, and the star-spangled banner, which should have waved an eloquent greeting, soaked into sullen silence, spanned the streets leading to the common, where a thousand school-children were formed in two lines, making the air ring with shouts of "Welcome, La Fayette!" Then the procession passed to

the Coffee House, where Judge Story met the General with beautifully appropriate salutations, to which he made a cordial reply. Hamilton Hall was decorated by the ladies in preparation for a dinner to be given to the honored guest. Portraits of as many of the venerable inhabitants as could be mustered were hung on the walls, and it was my good fortune to wait on Miss Eliza Endicott by handing the oak leaves and garlands, to be arranged by her around the picture frames and windows with an elegance of taste that no one could rival. Three hundred gentlemen were seated at the tables, and at half past five the General took leave of the company, and was escorted out of town toward Ipswich by a cavalcade. But the weather was a literal damper to the pleasure of the day, although it could not lessen the ardor of a hearty greeting by which this small section of the country welcomed La Fayette.

The Sunday dispensation was the serious trial of our youth, and my recollections of the morning and afternoon services are vivid. Dr. Prince was the pastor of the First Church, and there was some hesitation about settling him on account of the delicate health which would probably

*Observance
of Sunday.*

shorten his life ; but he survived to bury every parishioner present at his ordination. He walked the streets in clerical garb of shovel hat, black coat and breeches, waistcoat with long flaps, silk or worsted hose, and buckled shoes ; in the pulpit, his thick white hair combed back from his forehead and confined in a roll behind the ears made him an attractive specimen of an old-time parson ; gown, cassock, and bands left nothing to desire in the outer man, but the sermons, made up in large measure of remarks supported by references to chapter and verse of the Old Testament, however edifying to the elders, were neither useful nor interesting to the youth of his congregation ; and the long prayer, during which nobody would have thought it proper to sit down, richly merited its descriptive adjective. He was a devout man and a profound theologian, but he certainly erred in the choice of a profession ; he should rather have devoted himself to science and philosophy, for his thoughts were apt to go astray in the church when any object of unusual interest was waiting for him in the study. He occasionally made droll mistakes that set the young folks into fits of giggling, not to be checked by the most

*Theology in
old times.*

impressive parental frown. He has prayed that "vacant young ministers might be supplied with parishes," has requested the choir to "sing a chapter of Matthew," and informed us "that the governor had appointed the usually lugubrious last Thursday in April as a day of illumination and prayer." But there never was a kinder man than our pastor, and if he did send an apology to a parishioner for not having attended his daughter's funeral, when she had only been married, the intended politeness was all right and nobody was affronted.

Dr. Prince, although so quiet and unob- *Science.*
trusive, must have taken a most respectable position among the noteworthy men of his time. He originated valuable improvements in the brass mounting of the telescope, for which he made the work and finished it on his eightieth birthday; he added to the beauty of the kaleidoscope, and contributed largely to the construction of the Lucernal microscope, and the air pump known as the American air pump owed its creation to him. But his modesty being as rare as his learning was profound, he gave all his discoveries to be used by others, and, content with useful-

ness, never sought for fame. At this period there was not so great a reverence for antiquities as fashion and the centennials have developed in the rising generations. When anything was too old to be useful or ornamental it was altered and made over until, if the innate capacity existed, it turned out as good as new ; thus it proved with the pulpit of the First Church, and the parson and his people were equally pleased by the ordination of a handsome young minister, Rev. Charles Wentworth Upham, to aid the senior in his declining years. Two or three more "winters of our discontent" showed the absolute need of another building: so the venerable old church was pulled down to give place to a brick edifice on the time-hallowed spot, which could boast of no remarkable beauty, and this has been altered and re-altered until very little of the original architecture has been left. But we must take a farewell peep at the ancient squalid interior, with its uncarpeted aisles and pen-like pews, before we not irreverently close the doors.

*Old and
new.*

It might easily be supposed that the clap seats in the pews were intended to perpetrate a "*feu de joie*" at the close of

the service ; it was no disrespect to the sacred edifice to be glad to get out of it, especially in winter, when the foot-stove circulating round the pew alone kept us from shivering with cold, for the great black iron stove in the broad aisle did not do much toward moderating the temperature. The seats on hinges were turned up during the prayers and benediction, and let down at their close with a clatter of slams. A prominent worshiper and head of a family once forgot to lower the seat, and the result was a nearer proximity to the floor than was desirable to him or to the children. No mortal could have stood bolt upright through a long prayer ; hence the clap seats.

Charles Dolliver, the blind organist, was for many years an affliction to the parish, borne with patience, through pity. His poor life was so scantily furnished with pleasure that a dismissal seemed almost cruel, but at last he was "retired," let us hope with every possible alleviation. His highest week-day enjoyment was the tuning of pianos, in which he was assisted by the owners, as his blindness prevented him from putting the key on the screws. When the instrument satisfied his critical ear, he

A blind organist.

asked the indulgence of holding a skein of silk for one of the ladies of the family to wind, begging that it might be a tangled one ; so it was well snarled before putting it over his hands. That duty being accomplished, he drank a glass of Madeira, received a silver dollar, and was led home to his lodgings. The joint tuning, the snarling, the winding, and the office of guide fell to the share of the present writer, for which I suppose she received the not tangible reward of a tolerably good conscience. Mrs. C. W. Upham, whose shyness too often hid the rhyming faculty and wit natural to her as sister to O. W. Holmes, wrote "A Farewell to Dolliver," the closing verses of which expressed the hope that in the better land his sensitive ear might never be vexed with discord, and that he should "strike a harp celestial there." A friend to whom it was lent returned it with an added stanza, which was probably nearer the ideal heaven of Charles Dolliver : —

The family poetry and wit developed in a lady.

"Kind lady, ask another boon,
For Dolliver thy prayer recall :
Let heaven's harps be out of tune,
And he be there to tune them all."

A walk on Sunday evening was not thought sinful, but it must have been

classed among superfluities, as I recall only two such events during childhood. The family sat on the doorsteps in Warren Street to admire the sunsets, of which the view was delightful, but I envied the dear little schoolmate who so often accompanied her father on a pleasant stroll, as a fitting close to the day. Once I was solemnly taken to the Danvers burying-ground to visit the grave of Eliza Wharton, but I fail to see the fitness of the pilgrimage. Witch Hill was my second indulgence, and with visions of the pins then kept in the old Court House pricking my heart, I climbed up the rocks without the least idea that my two great-grand-children would boast a grandmother eight or nine degrees removed, who was hanged for a witch on the accursed spot. Bridget Bishop was a very shrewd woman, who was fond of dress and kept a shovel board, whatever that may be ; these were the only faults of which she appears to have been guilty, unless we add to the list that she was infinitely wiser than the deluded idiots who bore false witness against her, or the merciless judges who condemned her to an ignominious death.

A. E. S.

Ancestry !



THE GRANDMOTHER



CHILD'S world would be hardly worth living in if there were no grandmothers to make it all that it would be reasonable or unrea-

sonable to expect, and the grandchildren descended from the Pickering family had a first-rate one, at whose table they ate roast chickens and batter pudding (a lost art) every Wednesday, giving her their rather upsetting company on Election and Thanksgiving days as a matter of course. And now I will describe a primitive Thanksgiving dinner, as there have been so many modern innovations that the old fashion may be well-nigh forgotten. First in order was a huge turkey, roasted before a wood fire, vegetables of the season, cranberry sauce at discretion ; next roast ducks ; plum pudding, mince pie, apple pie, and squash pie ; nuts, raisins, figs, and apples. There was no preliminary soup, and as for ice cream, I doubt if a spoonful could have

Thanksgiving Day.

been had in Salem for love or money. Kind, reticent grandfather carved at his end of the table, grandmother presided at hers, and probably all the guests helped to the dishes near them, — a courtesy then, an impropriety now, but changes are not always improvements.

The large, square house on Front Street was in a thoroughly disagreeable situation ; market carts drawn by oxen were crowded near the windows, but the door once opened, not Aladdin's palace could have been so lovely to my eyes as this plain, old-time abode. The parlors were less than nine feet in height ; the ceiling of one was embellished with a beam that looked as if it were rough-hewn by an axe, and I wondered why it could not have been made smooth with the same tool. It was a cozy room, with a huge sofa, a lolling-chair, two wooden rockers, cushioned to render them endurable, and half a dozen chairs, hard enough to make the children seated on them sufficiently uncomfortable ; yet the price was five dollars each, for they were well made, and their strength is proved by the fact that they still exist in good condition. The table had its two drawers, not to hide dinner in if unexpected company

A grandfather's house.

arrived, but to keep the damask cloths handy for daily use ; a card-table and oval light-stand completed the furniture, and as there was not an ornament in the house the mantel was unadorned ; even the candle-sticks would have been thought superfluous. There was a locker in the end window which contained nothing more valuable than old newspapers, but on the upper shelves of a closet by the chimney were the remnants of the handsome India china imported by grandfather : plates and bowls of brilliant colors, and about half of a delicate tea service with a border of faint hues, relieved by dull gilding and his initials, I. D., in the same style. The number of bowls was diminished by grandmother's habit of giving a large one to each of her daughters on her marriage, to wash glass and silver in, and I suppose that when they broke one they asked for another. All that remain are now in my possession, and I am proud to say I am so afraid of their being cracked that they are utterly useless and unused. A parlor on the opposite side of the entry was nicely wainscoted, but we never loved it as we did the other dear old room. The chamber fireplaces were tiled with scriptural enormities

A well-remembered closet.

in pink and blue, on which I pondered with a mixture of belief and doubt, for Jonah and the bald prophet were a severe tax on my credulity. There were no chests of finery to be peeped into, no laces, no silks or satins. Born of a plain, Puritanic family, Canton crape was the grandmother's only wear, with muslin round-eared cap, and white kerchief folded over the front of the dress: a charming costume for a handsome old lady, but I never ceased to wish that she had worn brocades in her youth, and had preserved them for her grandchildren.

The aged couple died within a month of each other, and the light of the annual festival almost went out with them; right or wrong, Thanksgiving Day lost much of its thankfulness. The verses with which I close this episode of child life will tell the simple story of a Christian woman, and if her type is out of fashion it was eminently suited to the age in which she lived.

*My Grand-
mother's
Mirror.*

MY GRANDMOTHER'S MIRROR.

It is in a simple framing,
Not hardly worth the naming,
More fit for homely dwelling
Than for chamber of the great;

Yet while I muse before it,
A light from heaven gleams o'er it,
Transforming of its plainness
To a thing of noble state.

While her beauty all were praising,
At her mirror she stood gazing,
And for her I read the story
Of the shadowy pictures there ;
Could she have seen them clearly,
It might have cost her dearly,
But mercy dims the future
To save us from despair.

Still we know the ancient building,
With the morning sunbeams gilding
The rooms where peaceful slumbers
For busy days prepared ;
Where the father and the mother,
True helpmeets to each other,
Made by love the duties lighter,
Which their children with them shared.

'Mid Puritanic teaching,
Under Calvinistic preaching,
With a precious six months' schooling,
She lived for eighteen years ;
Then with her chosen lover
She passed the threshold over,
To bear with him the burden
Of wedlock's hopes and fears.

No doubt the deacon blessed her,
Though he may not have caressed her, —
When the heart is at the fullest
There are fewest words to say ;
And I think a tear-drop started
To the mother's eyes, when parted

From her dutiful young daughter
Upon her wedding-day.

With earthly comfort round her,
The rolling years still found her
Rejoicing in her blessings
And submissive to her woes ;
Death visiting her dwelling,
Some griefs too sad for telling,
Yet through all her faith sustained her
In the grandeur of repose.

To the poor her hand extended,
Her gifts she always mended,
'Til the needle-work like broidery
Upon the garments lay ;
Her quiet bounties flowing,
Her kindly lessons showing
The means to earn a living,
Which was far the better way.

Her household daily scanning,
Its occupations planning,
No idle bread was eaten
Where her busy hands were found ;
Her children all arising
To call her blessed, prizing
The deeds of love she scattered
So graciously around.

No silk or purple clothing !
One might think she looked with loathing
On scarlet or fine linen
For those 'mongst whom she trod ;
Yet I'm glad that I am able
To recall the muff of sable,
And her cloak with sable edging,
When she walked to worship God.

On the precepts of her Saviour
She modeled her behavior,
A chapter always reading
Ere she laid her down to rest ;
Through "pastures green " she wandered,
By the "still waters " pondered,
And of all the books she studied
She loved the Bible best.

With no vain show to grace her,
Her works will always praise her,
And she did her duty bravely,
Because she feared the Lord.
In her mirror I see faintly,
What made her life so saintly
While she, in clearer vision,
Has the fullness of reward.





SALEM SCHOOLS

THE conspicuous instructors of the closing years of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries were Mrs. Rogers and Mr. Bigelow, both held in very high esteem by the most respectable inhabitants of Salem. Mrs. Rogers' school was in the lower part of the town, and consequently many of her pupils were the daughters of the Democratic families ; they were very fond of her, and received at her hands excellent training in the various branches then considered essential to a polite education. Mr. Bigelow was, I venture to guess, more patronized by the parents of youthful Federalists ; his reputation as a teacher was high ; his scholars were attached to him, and imbibed under his direction a love of literature and a large amount of general information. The young misses were taught the Greek alphabet and pronunciation without knowing the mean-

*Salem
schools.*

ing of a word, and were set to reading alternate verses of the New Testament with the class of boys ; this exercise must have been rather funny and of questionable utility.

*Salem
school-
mistresses.*

From several reliable sources I have been able to collect as many items concerning Miss Hetty Higginson's school as I could spare room for in the chronicle of Salem school-mistresses. It is necessary to begin the account with a notice of her mother, Mrs. Higginson, as she and her daughter were in such close sympathy that it would not be easy to separate them. She was the wife of Mr. John Higginson, registrar of deeds for Essex County, who died in 1774, leaving her with their only child, a daughter. Mrs. Higginson was a woman of large intellect, that might have entitled her to fill any position which her altered circumstances required for a support, but she was so loyal to her king, George III., and so free in expressing her opinions, that she became very unpopular, and found it discreet to take refuge in Halifax. During this voluntary exile she maintained herself and her daughter by teaching a school, but in 1782 she returned to Salem, preferring to endure persecution from a

few over-zealous Whigs to remaining longer an absentee. However, her enemies must have been even more virulent than she feared to find them, for Dr. Joseph Orne, in a letter to Colonel Timothy Pickering, said under date 1782, "Your old friend, Mrs. Higginson, has returned, but as she is liable by law to be sent back and is quite as disagreeable to the people as any man would be, there is so great a ferment among them that she is obliged to live with her friends in Beverly." Soon after peace was declared she and her daughter opened a school in Salem, which had a high reputation under their joint care, and afterward under the sole charge of Miss Hetty, who survived her mother many years; her pupils were younger, but whenever they left her to attend a more advanced school their places were filled by ready applicants. Her manner of teaching was original, simple, and thorough; she felt as a good mother would feel toward the children; she was indulgent, encouraged them to be frank and free with her, but exacted entire obedience. She was true herself, and made them love truth. When asked what she taught, she would sometimes laughingly reply, "Ethics;" to

A royalist lady.

a superficial observer it might seem that she taught nothing, but her answer in sport could be accepted as correct in earnest. Her manners were courtly and her conversation was replete with dignity, kind feeling, and sound sense.

*Sundry
anecdotes.*

Her pupils were of many generations. The first slight record is taken from my letter-writer, who held the honorable rank of "bussee," a little girl kept to be kissed by her when good. I strongly suspect that Miss Hetty was apt to choose a pretty as well as an obedient child for this reward ; it would be consistent with her love of the beautiful. The second anecdote is from a pupil of much later date, who remembered how Miss Hetty would divide a large strawberry among six or eight scholars as a mark of approval, and that they were better pleased by the atom seasoned by her praise than they would have been by a plateful without it. The third story is from her own lips ; therefore it is especially valuable, and must be given with a judicious reserve of a surname for the hero. Miss Hetty told her friend that the children came running in with horror depicted on their faces, exclaiming, " Oh, Miss Hetty, Miss Hetty, George — has been

treading on a caterpillar ! ” and as she was probably even then laying the foundations of future “ anti-cruelty to animals ” societies, it would not have been consistent to pass over such a deed without notice. She accordingly said, “ George, you ’ ve been treading on a caterpillar. Now come here, George, lie down, and let me serve you as you have been serving the caterpillar. ”

The little culprit, though dreading his doom, bent down ; Miss Hetty ’ s foot was raised, the children, we may fancy, gazing with mingled satisfaction and terror, when just as the touch was to be felt the awful foot was withdrawn and George dismissed. Her favorite discipline for a restless child was to set him or her to holding an old dictionary by one of its leaves, a process requiring a rigid immovability ; on one occasion when the child had managed to tear the leaf, she mended it, and bade him hold it between thumb and finger the rest of the allotted time.

*Justice
tempered
with mercy.*

Miss Hetty was sixth in descent from Rev. Francis Higginson, pastor of the First Church. She was born in 1764 and died in 1846 ; she cannot be soon forgotten, as she and the school she ruled over so efficiently were unique specimens of a wise

*Early
education.*

monarch and obedient subjects. There was a school for very young children in the upper part of Broad Street, kept by a Miss Oliver, and I was sent there to pass several hours per diem at the advanced age of two and a half years; my thirst for learning was probably not intense, but I am sure that I remember the agony of swallowing a pin. I learned to read, spell, and sew after a fashion during the year of kindly teaching, but I suppose it was not to be educated, only to be got out of the way, that I was so early made a member of the academy, — an expedient in high favor in a town where there were few nurseries and plenty of children.

*A stitch
in time.*

Miss Mary Scallon, assisted by her step-sister, Miss Lucy Haraden, was the head of a school somewhat famous in its day. At the upper end of the school-room the scholars learned to spell all the words in an abridged dictionary, were made to read distinctly, and acquired as much of Murray's grammar as repeated plodding through it could lodge in their brains. I was taught to sew with invisible stitches, and filled two samplers with a variety of alphabets over my signature. I was proud of both these accomplishments. Miss Lucy

was the daughter of Captain Jonathan Haraden, who distinguished himself as a ship-master and privateer of cool and undaunted courage. We loved her for her unfailing patience and gentle rule, recited to her in geography and arithmetic, and blotted our copy-books for her inspection. We liked the elder sister also ; she was a genuine New England school-ma'am, very plain of speech, could scold on occasions, knew when to stop, and invented several queer punishments, which, however, were not severe. I suppose she was peculiar, yet we did not question her right to rule us in her own fashion, although we may not have approved her taste. She was always ready to give us pleasure if it was deserved, and when lessons were over we were allowed to read any of the few books on her shelves ; my first acquaintance with Charles Lamb was made in this way. In summer she kept a jug on the Russian stove, which the scholars filled with flowers from their gardens, and they were distributed among good girls to take home. There was a room adjoining the school, into which refractory subjects were sometimes ordered to repent their sins in solitude. This we preferred to any other penance, as it contained a

*Rewards and
punishments.*

closet filled with old-fashioned china, presided over by a richly dressed lady and gentleman in the guise of pitchers, and we could easily unlock the door, and thus enjoy what was meant for a bad quarter of an hour. I was happy with my teachers, and felt sorry to leave them when removed to a school for older pupils.

*Mr. Cole's
school.*

Mr. Thomas Cole had the pain and pleasure of educating several generations of the Salem girls. For many years he was the only instructor of a private school; the other teachers were instructresses. He at once took a high rank which he retained, and was regarded with favor by his many pupils. Manners were certainly awe-inspiring in 1825. Punctually as the clock struck eight in summer, nine in winter, and two P. M. both seasons, the masculine step was heard in the entry, the babel of feminine voices was hushed, the door opened, and — enter Mr. Cole. The scholars rose in their seats, and he walked 'mid solemn silence to the dais on which his desk and seat were placed; then gravely looking at us, he bowed a permission to be seated. Prayers and reading of the Bible followed, after which recitations, good, bad, and indifferent, were commenced. Recess was a

season of rollicking fun ; leaving the school was apt to be noisy when we were well outside the door ; this annoyed the teacher, and now and then we were scolded in moderation for running or loud talking. At the close of the scholastic year there was an examination under the auspices of a committee generally holding parental relation to some of the scholars. I disapproved of it, and declined attendance after one trial ; any misery was preferable to blunders under the gaze of these fatherly gentlemen. At the age of sixteen, having achieved a suitable amount of ignorance, I left the able teacher and pleasant school-mates, exchanging them for home reading and domestic life. Age is always regretting the follies of youth.

*Examination
day.*

Mr. H. K. Oliver was a good instructor, and made himself exceedingly popular with his pupils. Miss E. W. Ward's admirable school was a regular drill ; what she expected her scholars to understand and recite was never by any lapse of memory forgotten. To teach how to study is a rare gift. Miss Ward was endowed with the faculty, and the success of her school was largely due to its possession.

The Chestnut Street school-house, which

stood on the left side of the street, was, after the erection of the several handsome mansions, with their pleasant gardens, removed to Green Street, and was thenceforth known as the "Green Street school." It was a wooden building, wholly unattractive in appearance, but the school boasted a proud preëminence, and was taught by divers Harvard graduates, who while studying law had ample time to make the boys study their lessons. It was exclusively up-town, and always had every place filled by eager applicants. The annual exhibition was a grand entertainment, to which brothers and sisters went with mingled feelings of wonder and delight. The celebrated mathematician, Professor Peirce, who was one of the scholars, often selected remarkable pieces for his younger brother to declaim on these occasions. So C—— once rose, and after the regulation bow recited with undisturbed gravity the poem of the "five brave maids braiding broad braids;" then with another bow he left the platform, receiving an ovation of claps for his manner of doing full justice to the immortal verse. The boys, according to their wont, had asked for an extra holiday, which was promised on condition that the request

*Exhibition
at the
Green Street
school.*

should be made in Latin, whereupon a pupil who was ambitious to prove himself a thorough classic handed his learned paper to the teacher with the signature of *Peterus Argentum*; the translation is left to the reader. These few memories are all that remain of the Green Street school, so famous in its day.

We had excellent dancing-schools many years before the advent of Papanti. Monsieur Mallet taught his pupils well, doing his best for awkwardness and bringing grace to perfection. Many a lifelong celebrity began her career in the hall on Central Street corner. One of the most charming was Charlotte F——, whose feet seemed to dance of themselves, finding teaching superfluous; and her cousin, Mary B. W——, was a little beauty and a reigning belle. Our distinguished mathematician earned an early fame by his masterly performance of the sailor's hornpipe, and he rises to my view, as I write, in blue jacket, white trousers, and tarpaulin hat; it was the prophecy of a great renown. Monsieur De Granval, the second teacher, vanished from sight in a *pas seul*, leaving us to endure with what philosophy we could muster the disappointment of no dancing-school ball. As to

*Heels versus
heads.*

*Other
schools.*

the other numerous schools for head and foot, is not their record in the hearts of the oldest inhabitants of Salem? — and there I must leave them.





SHOPS AND SHOPKEEPERS

I HAVE procured the lace for your sister, and send with it the piece you left as pattern; there is short of two yards. Mrs. Gilman put the whole at 14s. 6d., and if it does not answer it may be returned." On reading this account of a commission executed more than eighty years ago, I began to think, Who is this accommodating lady? By association of ideas I made a guess that proved right, and then heard the whole story from her granddaughter. Mrs. Gilman was the young widow of a once rich man, who had made a fortune, built a handsome house, and lived in a very expensive style at Gloucester. At his death there was nothing left for the wife and four children, so the brave, energetic woman immediately moved to Salem, and opened a shop, which prospered under her good management until she was able to build the house so many years occupied by the family of Mr.

*Romance
and reality.*

J. G. King. But here luck deserted her ; she was induced to enter into partnership with a young man, highly recommended, who turned out a scoundrel, for whose debts she, to her astonishment, found herself liable. Then she settled her affairs and went to Cambridge, where she opened a boarding-house for students. Her only son graduated at Harvard College, and was the author of the immortal "Fair Harvard," and this is why I have given a slight sketch of so good a specimen of the Salem shopkeepers.

*Successful
shopping.*

Thirty or forty years ago I occasionally made a shopping excursion through Essex Street, and could find almost everything that the feminine soul desired. Now too many of the old buildings have disappeared, and where they have been allowed to remain plate-glass has usurped the place of dingy little panes, and the pageantries of modern advertisements attract the eye where once a few modest pieces of cotton or calico were all we had to look at. The names on some of the signs over the doors are as legible in my jumble of a memory as if they were still there, and I can read, as I pass on, Mrs. M. T. Ward, Mrs. Bachelder, Hannah Harris, Francis Choate,

Thomas Downing, Ann M. Rust, Hannah Putnam, and General Hovey, but I regret that the letters of a few are partially obscured, so that I cannot decipher them. I am not sure that Miss Sally Bacon's name was on ever so small a sign; if it was not, its absence must be accounted for by the fact that it would have been superfluous in the locality. The residents of the neighborhood must have had their every-day wants amply supplied by her stock in trade, which was piled from floor to ceiling, "a mighty maze, yet not without a plan." Marbles and muslin, tape and tea, raisins and ruffling, candles and cotton, soap and sewing silk, nuts and needles, pins and pitchers, cloth and candies, — ask for anything; you were sure to get it with a promptness that bore honorable testimony to the order of the establishment. I am glad to know that she has an able successor in the person of her former assistant, Miss Maria Louisa Rhodes. On the other side of the street divers ordinary hucksters displayed in their windows gingerbread horses, men, and women (but no elephants), like those devoured by the young cannibal at the pathetic cent shop in the "House of the Seven Gables." It is a pity that Haw-

Useful incongruities.

*Nathaniel
Hawthorne.*

thorne did not love the town about which he wrote such beautiful stories. The shy, heroic spinster and little Annie, in the charming freedom of childhood, walking by his side through the old Main Street, with look and word ask us to forget his lack of appreciation, and so with our whole hearts we forgive him, in consideration of what he has done for us.

*Two well-
remembered
shops.*

Mrs. Bachelder's was a favorite resort for those who wanted a good article, were willing to pay a good price for it, and were not in a hurry. The deliberate movements of the comely mother and her two daughters, with the occasional allusions to domestic affairs, made an amusing variety in the morning walk ; and if we really had no time to spare, the granddaughter, Hannah, quick, bright, and sharp, could restore the balance of power at her own especial counter, and wait on us with dexterous celerity. Her mother, Mrs. Harris, in the immediate neighborhood, boasted two attractions, a circulating library, limited, and gibraltars in boundless quantity. She had the credit of reading all the novels, in order to be sure that they contained nothing injurious to the youthful mind ; perhaps she read them to please herself ; in either case

she deserved admiration and respect, for to wade through "Evelina" or "Sir Charles Grandison," with the "Mysteries of Udolpho" that frightened me out of several nights' sleep, was an act of perseverance not often equaled.

Miss Ann M. Rust was one of the conspicuous milliners, Miss Hannah Putnam was the other. Miss Rust had the larger collection of finery, with shelves full of handsome ribbons and glass show-cases of rich embroideries, in addition to the inevitable bonnets. She once imported a quantity of exquisite French caps, the strings of which were naturally a little crushed in the transit, and they were soon disposed of to eager purchasers; on innocently observing to a very enthusiastic aunt, who had bought one, that a warm iron would make all right, she indignantly exclaimed, "What, smooth a crease made in Paris? No indeed! never!"

*"Paris,
with all thy
faults I love
thee still."*

Miss Putnam had always on hand pretty bonnets, either brought from New York or made in the shop, and at certain seasons a trip up-stairs revealed many novelties to our unaccustomed eyes. It was quite an object to call early in the morning, for customers were numerous and the stock not

too extensive, but there was enough for the punctual, and the tardy went without. Miss Hannah had a correct eye for the fitness of things, and openly said that there was no one in Salem who knew how to put on a bonnet as well as a certain lady living at the upper end of Chestnut Street ; as this was an undeniable truth, nobody presumed to contradict it.

*A Salem
invention.*

Mr. Choate and Mr. Downing were exactly what gentlemen should be in their especial places. The bundle handkerchief that I bought as a souvenir at Archer and Downing's was, after twenty-three years' ownership, appropriated by some one who probably was as glad to get it as I was sorry to lose it. It must have been taken from the house, as I valued it too highly to make it useful to anybody but myself. I have lost dozens of these convenient articles, for they seem to rank with umbrellas ; to be borrowed and not returned. Is there no mild punishment for such minor sins ?

General Hovey had a stately air that I used to think was military, although the sword was changed for a yard-stick.

Mrs. M. T. Ward will be long remembered by all who are old enough to have profited by her taste. My youthful pur-

chases were restricted to her shop, not being permitted to patronize any other, so I had ample opportunity to decide that the French or English calicoes and the fine-checked muslins made the prettiest of gowns for a school-girl. A gentleman well known for acts of delicate kindness asked to be allowed to make the first purchase on the day that she commenced business, and I am sure that she stood behind the counter like a little duchess to sell something of the nicest to her friend, Mr. Henry Pickering, when he came down bright and early to make sure of being in good season. We will leave her in the highest rank of our honorable Salem shopkeepers, a shade among the many shadows I have evoked.

As bread is the staff of life, on which so many of us lean, it must not be forgotten that the earliest French bread, delicate rolls, and twists, long and braided, were brought to Salem by John A. Innis. He and his small hand-cart were the perfection of neatness. At first he called at our doors with the light and tempting contents, but after a while set up a bakery and shop. Half the charm lay in that cart, it was so new and neat, yet I suppose the

*"A virtue
of necessity."*

*The charm
of neatness.*

bread was just as good when it was sent for instead of being brought, for there was no diminution of excellence, such as too often occurs after a business is established. Milk biscuits, a strictly Salem manufacture, were sold by David Dowst. I think he was David; he certainly was not Goliath, — only a weak sort of a man, who was fortunate in a smart wife, renowned for excellent cake; and it was a pleasant errand to take a basket to their house in a court opening from Chestnut to Essex Street, and choose a variety of nice things from the tidy room over the bakery. These biscuits were still made a few years ago, when large quantities were eaten for “old sake’s sake” at a delightful family reunion in the Pickering House on Broad Street.

*Molly
Saunders.*

Anybody who has never tasted “Molly Saunders’ gingerbread” has missed a pleasure. In a small shop on Central Street was a door, half wood, half glass, such as were formerly so universal, and the children could peep at the destined feast before lifting the latch, thereby tinkling a bell to give notice of a customer. The common name of this gingerbread was “upper shelf” and “lower shelf.” “Upper shelf” had butter in it, “lower shelf” had

none ; “upper shelf” was three cents a cake, “lower shelf” was two ; and both were so delicious that whoever chose the one longed also for the other, but youthful funds were limited. It appeared and disappeared with the maker. Whether she was Mrs. or Miss is not now known ; if she retired from business during life, or left it in dying, is a doubt not to be settled. The Bedneys were the next occupants of the shop ; their election cake was good, but they were merely successors, not rivals, to the immortal Molly Saunders. *A mystery.*





NOTABLES

IF there was one thing more than another in which Salem took delight, it was the collection of notables and eccentric mortals which made no inconsiderable part of the population; and what a charm of individuality they added to the little town as they walked the streets in unconscious celebrity! The eminent physician, Dr. Treadwell, would have a crowd at his heels if he should reappear in that high-crowned hat, suit of black, knee-breeches, and square-toed shoes, worn as he plodded from house to house on his daily round of visits. Nature endowed him with oddity; a kind heart and clear head kept the display of it within bounds; his quick perception and dry humor made him an amusing friend in his professional capacity, whenever he found a patient who could appreciate these qualities, and he enjoyed serious discourse with any one interested in matters worth

*The medical
profession.*

talking about. He hid deep and tender feeling under the crusty manner in which he sometimes, not always, indulged ; he would growl like a bear at anything that did not please him, and shed tears of sorrow over the little children who, in his homely phrase, slipped through his fingers. He has slammed the door in the face of the tailor sent by a bereaved family to take his measure for a mourning suit, with a remark more honest than courteous : “ I don’t want any clothes ; got more now than my Dolly can take care of.” He was a skillful practitioner and a thoughtful scholar ; he accumulated a valuable theological library, was an able commentator on the Scriptures, and liked a discussion on doctrinal points. It was a sad day in Salem when the bells tolled for his sudden death ; fortunately a portrait is preserved by a silhouette which represents him almost as he was in life. His son, Dr. John, took his father’s place at his death. He had his full share of peculiarity, but endeared himself to his patients by a kindness and devotion that increased in proportion to his personal likings ; he was never negligent, but he could be particularly kind, and fortunate were those who ranked high on his list.

*A kind
heart under
a rough
exterior.*

*Science made
useful.*

Dr. Oliver was a doser of the old school ; the row of vials displayed during an illness over which he presided was appalling. He had many excellences, but did not attach enough importance to the text, "Cleanliness next to godliness." He seemed to regard a thermometer as an instrument by which to regulate change of raiment, adding or discarding with the rise and fall of quicksilver. He was a skillful physician, an adept in elegant literature, a scientific musician, and a true gentleman ; and there is also a silhouette that gives a faithful likeness of this respected Salem worthy.

Of the first ninety years of the centenarian, Dr. Holyoke, I am not able to tell much ; it is to be presumed that his standing was high during his medical career, but he left the profession many years before his death. He did not like to be treated with too much of the respect due to venerable age, and quietly put aside bread and butter that a lady rather officiously spread for him at our table, where he was taking tea, and helped himself to what he chose to eat ; old folks dread being thought superannuated, and this should always be remembered by those who would be attentive to them. He was a worthy citizen, and

a man of excellent sense; he lived to be nearly a hundred and one years old, and received the homage of a public dinner at the close of his century. His trim little figure clad in vestments of delicate drab color, his dried-up face in the setting of a brown wig, and steps supported by a not very necessary cane, was daily seen on the streets until the last few days of life. He, like the other doctors, is perpetuated in a silhouette. The artist who took all these wonderful likenesses was stationed at a window, from which he patiently watched for the passing of the celebrities, and it was through a lucky suggestion that the successful attempt was made. *A century of honor.*

The famous pedestrian of Salem was William W. Oliver, *Deputy Collector* of the Custom House; he was very tall and agile, walking as though he were the inventor of the seven-leagued boots, and wore them when he stepped over to Lynn to see what detained the cars that first ran upon the Eastern Railroad. He was not particular to don a walking suit and thick shoes for his excursions, so he was often seen flouting along the streets in silk or gingham gown of the period, and slippers perhaps down at the heel; no matter if he raised

*A faithful
recorder.*

clouds of dust or waded through puddles. Mr. Oliver was a powerful engine in running the machinery of the Custom House ; he knew all that there was to be known of its business, and so long as he lived he could give name, date, and minute account of transactions which may sometimes, when too elaborate, have been less interesting to the listeners than to the narrator. He reveled in the memories of old commercial prosperity, and was a valuable reminder of the past and a striking specimen of the ever present oddities, among whom "he literally kept the noiseless tenor of his way."

Who that has lived since 1820 in the City of Peace will fail to recall with feelings of respect the wiry figure of Peter Charles Louvrier, gallant and honorable Frenchman ? During several years he was the sole instructor in French and music ; many a fine musician and thorough French scholar have proved the fidelity of his impatient teaching in the one and his untiring patience in the other ; how he fretted us through our blunders and false notes by his "Wrong ! wrong !" and praised our smallest successes ; how he made us irritable as he was himself in the morning, but

never let the sun go down on his wrath, as his evening sacrifice of a dish of currants or a beautiful spray of sweet-brier testified ! All honor to the generous, impulsive little man, who in the land of his adoption was never guilty of a mean thought or action ! Faithful to his beloved France, he was a loyal citizen of this country and a conscientious supporter of its institutions.

A peace offering.

A very notable person before the war of 1812, during its continuance, and after peace was established, was the Rev. William Bentley, pastor of the East Church. He devoted all his energies to the service of his Maker and his country, and earned the love and respect of his parishioners by his faithful ministry. He supplied the Republican journals of the time with articles in support of the administration, preached allegiance to the good cause from the pulpit, and on some occasions, when he felt that his hearers could do better work outside the meeting-house than by remaining within, he dismissed them with his blessing. One Sunday afternoon some of the watchful inhabitants of Salem saw the British frigates, blockading the port, in hot pursuit of an American vessel, name unknown, but supposed to be in the mer-

Rev. William Bentley.

chant service. Mr. Nathaniel Silsbee, with one of his associates in business, immediately drove over the Marblehead road, taking his son perched on a foot-stool between them. They had not gone far when they met a horseman on full gallop to Salem, to procure men and cannon for the protection of the frigate *Constitution*; the chaise was turned, forces mustered, and the parishioners of the East Church were advised to go where there was such urgent need of help. Dr. Bentley, as a matter of course, went with them, but Old Ironsides was safe in the harbor before they reached the scene of action. In the afternoon he put aside his prepared sermon, and preached extempore from the text, "There go the ships." While the British were in possession of Washington, news was brought one Saturday night that Baltimore was taken, and in consequence the audience of Sunday was composed to a great extent of women, for the men were too anxious to absent themselves from their places of resort in such stirring times. On the arrival of the mail the rumor was contradicted. Baltimore was safe and the British general in command killed. An absent parishioner tapped on a window by his

*Sermon
and text.*

sister's pew and told the glad tidings, on which she sent her boy up the pulpit stairs to inform Dr. Bentley, who lifted his hands to heaven, reverently exclaiming, "Glory to God! Glory to God!" The late Governor Andrew was responsible for the following anecdote, and it would be a pity to doubt the truth of a tale so beautiful and touching. At a time when foreigners were almost unknown in Salem, a poor French-woman came there, lonely and friendless. She could not speak a word of our language, and there was no Catholic priest to administer the last consolations and shrive the parting soul, but Dr. Bentley was told of her sad condition, and went to her bedside with words of comfort in the accents of her own dear land; he heard her confession, gave her absolution, and thus enabled her to depart in peace. Then he wrote an account of what he had done to his friend Bishop Cheverus, of Boston, who replied, "You have acted well, my brother, and I thank you for the deed of mercy."

A good Samaritan.

There was a strongly marked individuality among the members of the East society, and the very loyalty for which they were distinguished created a prejudice

Progress.

against them as a body corporate, not as individuals. They were devoted partisans of the government, and gave liberally of their wealth to aid in prosecution of the war. Salem was a Federal town, and therefore opposed the politics of the reigning powers in public station or private life. The people believed in their minister and in his theology, which was of advanced liberality, and the more conservative churches of the same denomination held themselves aloof from the man who dared to say what he thought, whose convictions were just and clear, whose reverence was not to be doubted, and whose high sense of duty gained the love and respect of all who took the trouble to know him. The doctor was a great linguist and a remarkable man; his style in writing was involved and peculiar, but it would not have been judicious to express this opinion to his parishioners. Even his prejudices were allowed to have unbounded influence: he did not approve of organs, therefore bass-viol, fiddle, and I don't know what else did duty as orchestra; but I have my suspicions that there was no great love of music in the original congregation, or it would not have been patiently endured so long. Why he was al-

ways spoken of as "old Dr. Bentley" is a mystery, for he was not half-way between fifty and sixty at the time of his sudden and lamented death. Never was pastor more beloved, and seldom has a memory been so fondly cherished.

Under the ministry of his successor, the Rev. James Flint, three innovations were made: an organ, a new hymn-book, and a new church. I suppose the young folks talked the old folks out of their wishes into their own, for the organ made its appearance, and, —

Chances and changes.

"The music floating through psalm and hymn
Pervaded the ancient aisles so dim,
Sweeping away the doctor's whim
Into the dusty gallery."

One reform generally leads to another, and next it was found that new hymn-books were an absolute necessity, but the change was allowed only because the old books were in a dilapidated condition. The selection had been made by Dr. Bentley, and his friends were unwilling to discard it. The feeling was natural, but the sacrifice of sentiment was made, and a new hymn-book was compiled by Dr. Flint, retaining as many as possible of the old favorites. The Rev. William Swett, of Lynn, was the

*Eloquence to
the purpose.*

principal agent in this movement ; he saw the urgency of the case, and had received a hint on the subject from some of his friends, so after reading the hymn he addressed the choir in these words : " Sing the first five verses ; that is, if your books contain them." A smile might have been seen on many faces, and the conspirators were well pleased with the success of the plot. Dr. Flint, with eloquent and pathetic allusion to the squalor of the walls and discomfort of the pews and pulpit, preached the old meeting-house down, and the people built a new East Church on Washington Square, with satisfaction to all concerned. He lived several years to enjoy his achievement, and kept his reputation as a good sermonizer, a wit, and a man of varied intellectual gifts. His colleague, the Rev. Dexter Clapp, won the interest of the congregation, but as I must keep within the limit of old times I leave all further commendation to the friends who cherish his memory with respect and affection.

In these yachting days it seems especially appropriate to speak of the yacht of 1817, designed and built in Salem by Retire Becket, a noted ship-builder, for the prominent merchant and ship-master,

Mr. George Crowninshield. He made a handsome fortune by his interest in several privateers and his bravery as commander of many of them, among which the America held a foremost rank. He had all the attributes with which an ideal sailor is endowed: he was generous, skillful, and daring, and was warmly attached to his profession. He was a man of attractive presence and a good deal of a dandy, choosing to have everything belonging to him the best that money could buy, but he had taste enough to regulate this love of show, and never permitted it to descend to a commonplace exhibition of finery. His chivalrous character was displayed in obtaining the bodies of our Lawrence and Ludlow, who were killed on the Chesapeake when she was captured by the Shannon. He chartered the Henry at his own expense, manned the vessel with a crew composed of twelve ship-masters, and sailed to Halifax to pay the debt of gratitude. Their reception was honorable to the English and highly satisfactory to the Americans; the request was promptly complied with, and the bodies of the brave officers were brought to Salem, where a vast concourse of people assembled to pay the last respects to the illustrious dead.

*An ideal
sailor.*

The Cleopatra's Barge.

All who know Mr. Crowninshield's love of the ocean, his appreciative sense of beauty and his ample means for gratifying it, must see that the creation of the Cleopatra's Barge was inevitable. It is a mercy that she was not christened "Concordia's Car," as was at first intended. The Cleopatra's Barge was so magnificent as not to provoke a smile or be thought over-ambitious when the original was mentioned; but what could have ennobled that car? Spiked cannon and swords turned to ploughshares would have been the appropriate decorations. It must be remembered that splendor was unknown in vessels at that time, and it is no wonder that unbounded admiration was excited by such a novelty.

The account that follows is an extract from a letter written by a lady to a young friend, selected for its accuracy and for the fact that it is by an eye-witness: "But for sober description the sleeping room is very pretty, the hangings of the bed a rich variegated yellow patch, full curtains and handsome fringe. We found a yellow cat lying on the bed; the captain said she came on board of her own accord, and had chosen her position, and he intended to

take her with him for good luck. His 'hall,' as he styles it, is large and lighted from the top ; in the centre hangs a superb lamp that cost \$150. The beams of the ceiling are edged with a gilt beading, and two ropes covered with red silk velvet twisted with gold cord are passed along, to take hold of when the vessel rolls. There are two elegant sofas, about the length of four chairs each, the seats of similar velvet ; a border of gold lace on the edge and a deep red fringe. The design on the back is four harps (lyres), the strings of large brass wire, and the wood mahogany and burnt-maple. Cost \$400. A Brussels carpet, orange color and brown with a mixture of green ; two square mirrors at opposite ends, with gilt frames ; a lamp each side, with a gilt eagle standing by. The finish of the room, maple and mahogany varnished ; columns with gilt capitals alternated with cupboards, through the glazed doors of which we saw the china and glass. Captain Ben opened one, and said, 'See if we men have not some taste in arranging a china closet.' The plate is very rich : a superb tea-urn, twelve or fifteen inches high, with a lamp underneath, sugar dish and cream pitcher correspond-

*Description
of the Cleopatra's Barge.*

Transformation.

ing, and two dozen tumblers. Captain George unfolded the table linen and showed us his kitchen. Beside all these rooms and Captain Ben's, is another in the stern, which serves as a drawing-room to the 'hall.' In the forward part are the sailors' rooms, where we did not go; state-rooms with curtains. The sailors are dressed uniformly. We saw a very dirty boy on the wharf, running and kicking up his heels. Captain Ben said, 'That is to be my cabin-boy, and when he is washed, and scraped, and dressed in uniform, you will call him handsome.' The capstan I admire, but must tell you about that when we meet. It is matched by the figure of an Indian, with his arrows on his back, to stand on deck. Among all these beauties I have neglected an important one. Under the mirrors at each end of the room is a large golden cornucopia, and around the walls as a cornice is a row of gilt hat-pins, perhaps for the King of Naples to hang his hat on, as I hear the captain says the royal guest is to sit on that sofa. I hope I have not tired you in telling so much about Captain George and his Barge."

The first voyage of the yacht, unfortunately destined to be the last, exceeded

the most sanguine expectations of the owner. Captain Benjamin Crowninshield, of Marblehead, commanded the beautiful brig, and Captain George was a passenger. At the numerous ports of the Mediterranean in which she anchored, crowds of the inhabitants came on board, among them many distinguished individuals and high dignitaries. It has been said that the Pope accepted an invitation to visit her while she lay at Civita Vecchia, the seaport of Rome, but this cannot here be vouched for, and I take the liberty to doubt it. Madame Mère, the mother of Napoleon, and the famous Pauline were also guests, and the latter presented to their hospitable entertainer a dark green agate box, with a small oval, a fine Roman mosaic, on the lid, and a lock of her brother's hair. Both of them have been preserved as precious mementos in the Crowninshield family, and two pictures of the Barge, painted at Genoa, are in the possession of a grand-nephew. The whole voyage seems like a triumphal progress; and when, with colors flying, the Cleopatra's Barge entered Salem Harbor, she was welcomed by the vast crowds assembled on the wharves with a joyful greeting,

Elegant hospitality to distinguished guests.

due to the gallant enterprise and the success attending its accomplishment. A second trip was announced for the next year, but the plans were frustrated by the sudden death of the generous, large-hearted Captain George Crowninshield, a few weeks after his return to Salem.

Billy Gray. I have been looking with admiring eyes at two mantels, one yet in the Essex House, where the rich merchant Billy Gray lived from 1801, the year in which he built it, to 1809, when he left Salem in consequence of the bitter animosity of the Federalists, because he favored the embargo and they detested it. Probably the change in merchant vessels may have sent him to Boston in a few more years, the increase of size requiring a larger harbor; but it was a pity that an honorable man, with great wealth and a love of hospitality, as shown by the numerous evening parties alluded to in the "Old Letters," should have chosen to quit the little town where he might have been so useful and respected, if he had stayed long enough to try the experiment. Perhaps he stood in front of this same mantel when he finally determined to consult his own interests, and forsake the place in which he had

made so much money, and perhaps his political enemies wished that they had been a little more polite. Be it as it may, the house must have been commodious and handsome; but who carved the mantel, with its urns, wreaths, and elaborately adorned pilasters? Can anybody tell?

The other mantel is the ornament of one of the lower rooms in the old Forrester House, Derby Street, either bought or built by Simon Forrester. It is not so handsome as that in the house once owned by Mr. Gray, yet it is richly carved, with a picture-frame over it that is its greatest attraction. Mr. Forrester has been the subject for a good deal of fictitious romance, but his youthful adventure and subsequent history, as told by himself and corroborated by the sister of his wife, are interesting, and entitled to belief.

Simon Forrester's family originated in Scotland, and his father was apparently descended from a younger branch of the Barons Forrester, who also hold English titles. His father and uncle went from Scotland to Ireland, and bought a farm of two hundred acres near the Bay of Cork. Simon, like many adventurous lads, was early smitten with the desire to be

The Forresters.

*Erin go
bragh!*

a sailor, and on the death of his elder and only brother, John, to whom he was devotedly attached, he determined to leave Ireland, and if possible make his fortune in America. He was educated at Cloyne School, or, as it is sometimes called, Cloyne College, where he learned all that was thought sufficient to fit one for the life of a merchant. He was then nineteen years old. The laborers on his father's land were getting in the harvest, and one day, when it was necessary to hurry the work, they enlisted their master's son in the service; when all was finished he threw down his reaping-hook, saying, "This is the last time I will reap grain in Old Ireland." On the following morning, as a market cart was regularly sent into Cork, he mounted it, was driven to that city, and there took passage to Liverpool, where he met Captain Daniel Hawthorne, and shipped with him as fresh hand before the mast on a voyage to America. The story of his employment as a servant in Daniel Hawthorne's house is a fiction, probably told to emphasize his advance as son-in-law to his master; but the fact is that he was taken into Hawthorne's family, treated as a son to whom

he was much attached, and given his eldest daughter, Rachel, in marriage. Mr. Forrester left a large family of children, several of whom lived many years in Salem. His career was honorable and his liberality conspicuous, in both his business relations and social interests. It is not supposed by his descendants that he embellished his parlor wall with a pictorial history of his life, as he was singularly opposed to ostentation or pretension, and would not have chosen the rôle of hero in his own household. Mrs. Forrester must have been possessed of great attraction, if the lovely picture of her old age is a faithful reminder of her youth, and the beauty of many grandchildren may be considered a proof of ancestral charms and graces.

A lovely lady.





HAMILTON HALL

IN 1859 the Salem Assemblies were revived at Hamilton Hall, with a modest simplicity suited to the short reign of economy following in the wake of '57. At the close of the season a "Lady's Ball" was given, on which occasion Mr. John Remond, the ancient caterer of 1805, sent a large glass bowl used at the parties of that remote period, asking to have it placed on the supper table, filled with the celery which he provided for salad. When the bowl was returned to the polite old man, it was accompanied by some doggerel rhymes, and no more was thought about the matter until they appeared in the "Gazette," to which journal Mr. Remond sent them, with the history of the hall, which is probably correct. The aged ladies and gentlemen to whom he alludes must have died soon after his notice was written, but justice demands that it should be printed without

*A lady's
ball.*

the least alteration. Some persons may still live who can fill out the names of which the initials are given, and tell who were the original subscribers remaining in 1859.

“MESSRS. EDITORS, — I thank you for a space in your paper to insert the article on the subject of the Old Bowl, which re-appeared at the revival of the Old Assembly, and occupied the place that it did more than a half century ago. The lines on the Bowl made their way to Higginson Square, and came into the hands of the humble caterer of the Assemblies some time last spring, but they have been mislaid, and only were found within a few days. It may not be uninteresting to the surviving members of that institution.

*Letter of
John Re-
mond.*

“There are only two now living of the original subscribers; one resides in Federal Street, between eighty-one and eighty-two years of age; the other in Essex Street, of about the same age. Of the female members of the Assemblies, nine survive, — four out of the city, the remaining five living in it. Of the old tenders, but one remains, A. W., who resides on the south side of the mall. The stock of the South Building was

*Hamilton
Hall.*

taken up in 1804. The first assembly took place the Thursday after Christmas, in 1805. Hamilton Hall was named in honor of General Alexander Hamilton, who was about that time in Salem, and was the guest of the Hon. Benjamin Pickman. Those were the days when the princely merchants of Salem built halls for their sons, daughters, and associates, with every convenience necessary for such an establishment. Everything was order and decorum, from the managers down to the waiting-maids. The numbers were called at half past six ; supper at ten ; music dismissed at twelve. The original Assembly took the lead in Hamilton Hall ; the young men and maidens in the Concert Hall followed, and at the proper age many of them were introduced into the Old Assembly, not without standing the test of the white and black balls.

“If the humble caterer ever had any Dutch and Jewish pride, it was at that youthful day when the Old Punch Bowl took its stand, and he endeavored to serve that assemblage to the utmost of his ability. But other things are changed as well as dancing. The writer understands that there are fifteen different public dancing places in the city, while formerly there were but two.

“The history of Hamilton Hall should be better understood among the young gentlemen and ladies, — they would then know how to appreciate it; and it is believed there is not another instance, in this section of the country, at least, where a hall has been built at the expense of twenty-two thousand dollars, for the express purpose named above. While the hall was building, the proprietors imported from Russia the four mirrors that occupied the eastern and western portions of the room. The dancing there was conducted without glittering bayonets and fire-arms. We had no seats but the bare white benches, neither sofas nor drapery. The only decoration we had afterward was when the ladies entered. The number of the old friends who now survive, who have endeavored to keep up the reputation, will soon pass away. The writer has no ambition to gratify, and nothing for which to ask, but to preserve the Old Bowl. Cherish the hall; let it stand, and keep it untarnished for its intended purpose.”

*Hamilton
Hall.*

A NEW SONG.

BY AN "ELDERLY LADY."

When this old bowl was new,
The magnates of the land,
In numbers not a few,
Did form a joyous band ;
And many a stately dame,
So beautiful to view,
To our assemblies came,
When this old bowl was new.

Then ladies bright did shine
In loveliness and pride ;
While draped in muslin fine,
The maidens fair did glide.
Then waved the ostrich plume
O'er matrons grand and true,
In our assembly room,
When this old bowl was new.

Knee buckles then appeared
With silken hose, they say ;
The rules of Fashion feared,
All bore despotic sway.
Then gentlemen were dressed
In coat of broadcloth blue,
With white and spotless vest,
When this old bowl was new.

The courtly minuet
And long-lined country dance
(For beaux and belles as yet
Had no quadrilles from France)
Were seen upon the floor,

As the dancers swam or flew,
With graces hovering o'er,
When this old bowl was new.

When supper-time came then,
The Elder Ladies proud
Were led by gallant men
Out through the waiting crowd.
The younger came in place, —
Their place full well they knew, —
And yielded with a grace,
When this old bowl was new.

The good old times are fled,
Have vanished far away ;
The stately dames are dead,
The men, — oh, where are they ?
The minuet is a dream,
Or like a tale that 's told ;
The light doth faintly beam,
Now that new bowl is old.

Yet Salem numbers still
Her daughters fresh and fair,
Who dance with right good will,
And silks and laces wear.
Their watch-spring hoops are wide,
Gowns hang in plenteous fold,
And they are Salem's pride,
Now that new bowl is old.

Bright eyes are glancing yet,
Fair cheeks are blushing on ;
But where " Old Ladies " sat
I gaze, — they all are gone.
No Elders now are sung,
The deed would be too bold ;

America is young
Now that new bowl is old.

The gallants of to-day,
In solemn suits of black,
Still make the ball-room gay,
While outward show they lack.
Yes, we can praise them too,
Nor leave their worth untold,
Though old times now are new,
And that new bowl is old.

Mrs. Remond, the wife of the caterer, will be remembered for her charming manners and good cooking. Her mock-turtle soup, venison or alamode beef, and roast chickens, with perhaps ducks, and light, not flaky pastry, made an ample feast for a dozen gentlemen at the fashionable hour of two o'clock. Dinners then had one advantage over dinners now, — the guests knew what they were eating.





A FEW SALEM GENTLEWOMEN



OUR most delightful old lady, one whom we all loved and honored, was Mrs. Elizabeth Sanders ; her mind was of a high order, her heart warm and sympathetic. She was the centre of a prosperous and happy family, performing well the duties of life, liberally bestowing its blessings on the less fortunate, filling existence with all the graces of hospitality, the ornament of a large circle of friends and the light of home. She was a reformer and a philanthropist : reformer of doctors too liberal in the use or abuse of drugs, a homœopathist unawares ; philanthropic in the cause of the Indian, whom she regarded as the dethroned sovereign of the land. She was an attentive listener to the best books, for all her knowledge was obtained orally, as she was not able to use her eyes in reading ; she was a lover of the classics through translations, reveled in Ossian, and was a

Mrs. Elizabeth Sanders.

critical and devoted admirer of Shakespeare. Her house was at the service of the grandchildren, whose happy weekly meetings in those hospitable parlors can never fade from their memories, and it was a privilege to reciprocate the unfailing kindness by charming birthday festivals, sometimes arranged as a surprise, and always sure to be most graciously received. She was an ideal grandmother, who retained the devotion of her descendants through eighty-seven venerated years, and her last sweet words on earth were, "My little children, love one another."

Miss King.

Miss Augusta King, eldest daughter of J. G. King, the eminent lawyer and wise father, who kindly strove to fit his children for the action of life, was a typical converser among many who talked well, and her presence was hailed with pleasure at the social meetings she so largely helped to make agreeable. There was a charm in her conversation that was easier to appreciate than to describe ; it glowed, it sparkled, it rolled in a deep channel, or rippled like a brook when sunshine lies lovingly on it. It must have been a well-stored mind that could share its wealth with so many and never exhaust itself, and we who valued

her while living treasure the memory of a delightful companion who did so much to brighten the world from which she was too early taken.

Miss Susan Burley, whose name was “a household word” in Salem, where so many years of her valuable life were passed, was a highly educated woman, who seemed to give an equal share to the acquisition of varied knowledge and the bestowing it with the devotion of a loving heart on the friends and family who gathered around her. And how kindly she talked with the young people, who almost crowded near her chair at the working parties to which they went with their mothers! It was thought quite a distinction to be asked a question by such a wonderfully wise lady, and if it could be answered to her satisfaction her pleasant commendation was gratefully received; and even when she was only met by a timid silence, the tact with which she told what she wished her listeners to know almost made a bliss of the tolerably frequent ignorance. Salem was proud of Miss Burley, and although a “mutual admiration society” was never a much-patronized institution, a full appreciation of individual importance was usually discriminating and generous.

*Miss Burley
with her
young
friends.*

Among the few selected from the many who might adorn this record of remarkable women, I must write a name which a few months ago I could not have taken the liberty to use, — the name of Miss Mary Orne Pickering ; for death, in taking from us a valued friend, gives the privilege of the bestowal of praise on this gracious lady of the old school. She was so kindly and cordial in manner, so careful to observe all the charming dues of friendship, that we might have been well satisfied without any added claims to our regard. But this is only the half that might be told ; from her father she inherited the high order of tastes that enabled her in some instances, by a correspondence with distinguished men of genius, to finish what remained incomplete in his life work, and this was, to such a mind, a never-failing source of happiness. She dearly loved the ancestral house where she dwelt on her return from a long sojourn in Boston, and while she received there so much happiness, she bestowed an added grace, until it seemed that the portraits on the walls were watching her progress from strength to strength, while making the honored name she bore all the better and

*A lady of
the old
school.*

brighter for having belonged to a generous and noble woman.

It is a mingled pleasure and pain to tell of the brilliant women who left their places vacant; such memory is a rich legacy to those who knew their worth, and were saddened by their removal from all that made life honored and happy. Of one it is not easy, for those who best knew her, to speak with measured praise. The clearest head, the most expansive heart, a wonderful insight, that made her judgment of character almost unerring, devotion to her best beloved, a soul filled with religious aspirations, — all these qualities combined in complete harmony to form the character of Mrs. Mary Wilder Foote; and to this it may be added that a remarkable power of sympathy was perhaps her most delightful trait.

*A Salem
gentlewo-
man.*

“She brought a joy to add to ours;
For those who sit and watch alone,
Through day and night to make their moan,
She painted rainbows on the showers.

“A life so true can have no death,
Can never know untimely end,
And we who joyed to call her friend
Must bless her with our latest breath.”

It would be easy to describe a larger number of the delightful women who

*"Not too
bright or
good
For human
nature's
daily food."*

adorned the circle in which they moved, but it is only possible, in these limits, to say how and why they were so charming. Some were witty, some were wise, some were deep thinkers, some were careful readers, some could talk well, even on "Swift's Broomstick," and some had the happy faculty of drawing out the talent of others. Enough has been written in various parts of this little book to show the value of a succession of Salem's daughters who have passed away at periods more or less remote, and if my praise should be thought excessive, I can only say that criticism is not my forte, and those who wish for a little more of that subtle article must supply it to suit their own notion as to the correct proportion of blame and praise essential to a complete analysis.





A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

First go the young maidens, next she whom we vaunt
As the beauty and pride of our dwelling.

BROWNING.



ABOUT the years 1820-1825 the blaze of beauty was at the brightest in Salem. To be handsome was almost a birthright, and time seemed only to change lovely girls into as lovely matrons; they would not grow old, they could not grow ugly, and set after set followed each other with undiminished attractions. So many have left the scene of their triumphs that the record is tinged with sadness, but my picture gallery is filled with portraits, of whom I will try to furnish a catalogue that may be guessed into completeness. I easily count twenty women of remarkable beauty, twenty more so charming that in any other place they would have been conspicuous, and at least three out of four, who met in our parties or on the streets, were good-looking

*"Old and yet
ever new,
Simple and
beautiful al-
ways."*

*Old fashioned names
and modern
versions.*

enough for every purpose of life. I would like to give their names at full length, but there are some still with us who could not be omitted, and would not choose to be mentioned; yet there is no harm in telling that we had Elizas, Marthas, Sallys, Marys, Susans, Elizabeths, Mary Janes, Ellens, Claras, Louisas, Hannahs, Carolines, Harriets, Rachels, Rebeccas, Sarahs, and Charlottes, and I can boast that there was not a Mattie, Sallie, Mamie, Susie, Nellie, Louie, Carrie, Hattie, or Lottie, among them. Good, sensible names were given in baptism, and their diminutives were usually reserved for those who had a legitimate right to use them. May I be permitted to deviate from my rule in speaking of Miss S. Ellen Derby, who was my childhood's ideal? Her pure and exquisite beauty, as she lived among us, appears in perfect harmony with the character developed in after years, that made her the angel of the house through a long and honored life. I have written this solely to gratify myself by a covert allusion to a childish incident.

So ends "A dream of fair women."



SALEM AND HARVARD



HE famous class of '29 has always kept itself well before the public eye by its intrinsic excellence and thorough self-appreciation. A class has earned a right to be proud when it has given to the world a judge, an exquisite singer, a delightful poet, a distinguished preacher, a great mathematician, the author of "My country, 't is of thee," eminent lawyers, good business men, lovers of literature, excellent lecturers, and some who, missing their opportunities, passed through life with remarkable talents not well invested, sad reminders of "what might have been."

*The Harvard class
of '29.*

The gay young girls who frolicked together in the four studios (?) years of the collegians first claimed them as partners in the dance, and always kept up a warm interest in their success and high repute. Those years were full of fun, and our small parties were enjoyed to the utmost limit of

*Reasonable
hours and
simple toi-
lettes.*

possibility by the sixteen or twenty youths and maidens, who danced to the music of the piano "played to the foot" by some few of the number. The style of conversation was rather ambitious, and I really think — but perhaps it would be better not to say what I think. We met at seven o'clock, and went home at ten, and we, the ladies, felt ourselves sufficiently fine in the alternation of silk and poplin for the winter, with white cambric and pretty ribbons for the summer. There were heads covered with curls, bright faces, and sunny tempers, but we were still school-girls, and our teacher thought our brains in so unsettled a state during "the season" that there was not much to be got either in or out of them. We were permitted to take a country walk once a week, and it was not a rare occurrence to be escorted from the school, after the corner was turned, by any of the five members of '29 who lived in Salem. These were often visited by other classmates, who were with us on our social evenings. If we had been thirty years of age instead of ranging from fourteen to sixteen, "the conduct of life" on these occasions could not have had a more dignified basis, and any kind hints from older

friends, who had the right to give them, were received with deference. A very elegant woman, who probably never was guilty of an abrupt movement, used to say to us, "Slowly, young ladies ; grace is never in a hurry," and we would make our reverences in the courtesy cotillon, under her kind but critical inspection, and glide as easily as we could from the parlor where we danced, in the fine, handsome house, to the dining-room, where we surrounded the table on which the simple feast was spread. Only three remain of all this happy band, the rest have sooner or later trod the lonely path, and the two highly respectable grandmothers may take the liberty to change a word of the poet's graceful verse in saying : —

*A stately
dame.*

" We ask but one memorial line
Traced on thy tablet, gracious mother, —
My children, girls of '29,
In pace — how they loved each other ! "





ODDS AND ENDS



BRIEF notice of the fashions from 1820 to a few years later will find a suitable place among the "Odds and Ends." When a

*Fashions for
all ages.*

lady reached the age between thirty and forty, the walking attire considered most elegant, in addition to the unflounced gown, was a long shawl of Indian cashmere, with palm leaves at the ends and a narrow border at the sides; this was carefully adjusted on the shoulders, and draped in a graceful festoon over the left arm. A "whole flat," that is to say, an uncut Leghorn hat, folded up behind and flapping down in front, trimmed elaborately with expensive ribbon, was a distinguished head gear.

The young belles wore the prettiest of chinchilla caps, with a gold or silver band, and, as the face was wholly exposed, a quilling of thread lace, as a slight protection against the wintry winds, was put round

the edge, and brought to the chin on a ribbon finished with a bow. The lovely rosy faces were fitly adorned by this becoming head-dress, and a silk pelisse of deep red or orange-brown set off the pretty figures to the best advantage. Two young ladies who made a morning call at our house on a bright, cold day were absolutely radiant. One was Miss E. C., the other Miss S. W. It is a dangerous topic, for the theme of Salem beauty is inexhaustible, and a friend has told me that she was invited to a wedding, some five and thirty years ago, at which every woman in the room was handsome and charmingly dressed. The account may be taken with a grain of salt, but it is doubtless very nearly accurate. A pumpkin hood was not infrequently worn by the benefactress of the Essex Institute, and when any lady was on her way to a working party or a tea-drinking by broad daylight, she put a silk calash on her high-puffed, profusely-curled head, and walked through the streets with unquestioned propriety.

*Wedding
guests.*

But to pass the insurance offices was like running a gauntlet. The gentlemen swarmed out to the sidewalk to stand in judgment during at least an hour, and woe

*Running the
gauntlet.*

unto the luckless dame or damsel whose demeanor and costume did not suit their fancy. To do them justice, they probably admired more than they condemned, but still it was an ordeal, and now and then some uncivil commentator, after a steady stare, would insinuate that the pretty girls walked that way to be "seen of men." And what if they did? But they did n't; and if they did, they had the right to suit themselves; it was not to be expected that they would retreat to the back streets because the lords of creation chose to dominate over the main thoroughfare. In those days there was no club-house, no billiard-room, no restaurant, and the Essex Street review was certainly a harmless forerunner of those modern amusements. In "fancy's eye" I can see the whole row, and am really glad that so respectable an employment was capable of affording such pure enjoyment to our honored ancestors.

It would be ungracious to omit a passing notice of the pleasant parties, sleigh-ride frolics, and merry dances in Concert and Hamilton Halls, but owing to the number of years over which they were scattered their only resting-place must be among the Odds and Ends.

The small reunions at private houses were simple, and usually agreeable. The sleigh-rides on snapping cold winter evenings were equally enjoyed by the older and younger participants in the fun. The large sleighs drove from door to door, taking in twenty or thirty ladies and gentlemen, bent on having a good time; and when Lynnfield Hotel was reached, a fiddle "put life and mettle in the heels" and set the whole company to dancing Virginia reels in the long entry, while a not over-elegant supper gave us ample refreshment, after our strenuous exertions.

*Our sleigh-
ing parties.*

The dances at Hamilton Hall, where we all knew not only our partners, but everybody in the room, were full of enjoyment, and as the evening wore on the excitement was on the increase without the aid of wine or champagne; and if ostrich feathers were shaken from the hair over which they had majestically waved, it was easy to put them in the pocket and dance on without them. Now and then we attended a military ball, and the best, most dexterous dancer ever seen on the floor was Mr. Dalton, who could thread the mazes of a cotillon, holding the cup of coffee that he was about to hand to a lady, without spill-

*And our
merry
dances.*

ing a drop or losing a step of his performance. The private balls were charming, and as the number of guests never exceeded eighty or a hundred there was no possibility of a crowd in the spacious rooms of the old-fashioned houses. The music was usually furnished by the native bands, and was so satisfactory as to prevent the necessity of an importation from Boston. "Pat Gilmore," as he then liked to be called, played in a rare degree of perfection. How many good things had their beginnings in Salem! There were not so many invitations received during the season as to make acceptance a matter of indifference. Tea-tables were a peculiar institution, and the delightful friends who assembled on the Tuesday nights of the winters of 1851-52 and '54 will always hold a place in the memory of the hostess who was so glad to welcome them; more than half are gone from among us, but they are counted in, and there can never be a vacant chair.

*Gilmore's
band.*

It is difficult to imagine that long, dull Derby Street within thirty years contained a work of art so transcendently beautiful as what seemed to be a queer-looking carpet, out of which one day a woman was

beating clouds of dust as it hung on the pole in her yard. Mr. Ephraim Miller, son of the general who so modestly "tried" and bravely succeeded, was walking by the house, when his attention was roused, and on nearer view he discovered it to be a tapestry with figures large as life, exquisitely wrought from the cartoon of Raphael, "Feed my Lambs." He entered into conversation with the woman, who told him that her husband, a sailor, had brought it home on his last voyage, in compliance with her petition for a carpet to cover the floor of her best room. He did not happen to visit any port where he could buy what she desired, but at last discovered this old thing, rolled up in a little shop on the quay of Malta, and bought it for her. The tapestry proved too large for the "best room," so a great piece of it was turned under, and in this way the superb border of fruit and flowers, wrought in silk and gold thread, was fresh and bright as when it came from the hands of the workmen, and it was all in a fine state of preservation. Mr. Miller found that the sailor's wife had been grievously disappointed at not getting a real carpet, instead of this "queer, picture-like thing," and, seeing his

*A wonderful
bargain.*

*Raphael's
cartoons.*

chance, he took advantage of it by offering to give her a Kidderminster, or whatever she might choose, in exchange for the treasure so wasted on its possessor. Lest she should change her mind, he went with her to Downing's, where, with much delight, she selected a hideous combination of red and green, after which they separated with mutual satisfaction. Mr. Miller took the cartoon to the Custom House, where it was exhibited on a frame, which displayed the perfect beauty of the design and work. Its last movement was to the Cathedral in Montreal, where it probably remains to this day. Its history was never clearly traced, but it is supposed to have gone from England to Malta, and that it may have been one of the set ordered by James I. to be wrought after the cartoons. Would it not have been "a joy forever" if the Essex Institute could have laid loving hands on it !

Apropos to the Essex Institute is the East India Marine Museum, once irreverently spoken of by non-residents as the "Salem Museum," with the least possible sneer, as though Salem boasted a little too much of her chief treasures ; but this was in old times. The vast increase of the collec-

tions must have wholly changed the aspect of the great room, on which my young eyes gazed with delight and wonder. The especial attraction was, it must be confessed, in the group of Orientals, life size, with rigidly correct toilettes, but the polite janitor, who rose from his accustomed seat to point out what it was most proper to look at, always urged an examination of the carved-ivory celestial and infernal regions. I preferred the pagans, the shells, and butterflies. Salem may well have been proud, for there was only the Athenæum and the Museum to brag of, and the order and arrangement of the latter through the century are worthy of the high praise that it has always received from those who knew anything about it. The Peabody Academy of Science is a grand institution ; but I am glad that on the granite front of the building we can forever read the honored name of the East India Marine Hall.

It may be said of Salem gibraltars that they speak for themselves ; their fame has been widespread for more than sixty years, but perhaps the true story of their first appearance in the little town they helped to make famous is not generally known by the eating public. Mr. Spencer, an Eng- *Gibraltars.*

lishman, came to this country about the year 1822, and, being desirous of obtaining work, was taken into the employment of Mr. Merritt, the expressman, who during a long life secured the respect and confidence of his fellow-citizens. While in his family he experimented with the making of gibraltars, and succeeded so well that they met with a ready sale, which placed him in a comfortable position ; and it is probable that his mother soon followed him from England, as no old inhabitant of Salem can separate the idea of a gibraltar from a wagon driven by Mrs. Spencer from shop to shop, to supply the numerous wholesale customers. At first their means must have been limited, as a weekly purchase of the soft white paper in which the candy was neatly wrapped was as large an outlay as it seemed prudent to make, and it may be that this wise economy was an efficient aid to the extensive business following these very small beginnings. The gibraltars, when fresh, were almost as hard as their Spanish namesake, losing the brittle quality in the course of time, but never melting into stickiness. The retail price was a silver four-pence half-penny for seven, and many a child used to spend his

Thrift leading to success.

or her whole allowance in the purchase of the tempting sweets.

Mr. Spencer was a man of varied knowledge, and a delightful companion to those who had the opportunity of listening to his intelligent talk. His lectures delivered at the Lyceum were of a high order, especially one on "Light," as sparkling and lucid as the subject of the discourse. After many years' residence in Salem he inherited an estate in England, and went back to his native land, but always retained his interest in the place where he had lived so long, while its inhabitants, on their part, must have a peculiar and rather incongruous admiration for a person of such literary attainments, and the maker of Salem gibraltars.

Lyceum lectures.

"Hark, now I hear them ! ding, dong bell."

George Mulet, the blind town-crier, can ring for us as he did so many years ago, and while he stops at a wonted corner to proclaim that something is "found to-day," a procession starts, headed by Daniel Dutch, deputy sheriff, who with dog and stick will keep inviolable order. Skillikallee, *alias* Healy, has turned the key on his puppet show at the upper end of Essex Street.

*Procession
of Salem
worthies.*

Next comes the "needy knife-grinder," who might say, if he tried to recall half that he had seen or heard as he sharpened knives and scissors on his busy wheel, "Story! God bless you, I have one to tell you." Mr. Bedney, the sole letter-carrier and almanac-seller, does not seem like a bearer of good tidings, and from the expression of his face one might expect to find on the first leaf of the almanac, About this time look out for bad weather. Target Gale leaves his barber's shop with sausages frying in the back room. Sary Pease, Thanksgiving beggar, in sad-colored cloak, perhaps conceals two or three legs of mutton under its folds, and Mrs. Johnson is on her way from auction, with her purchases dangling at both arms. Johnny Geer, coal-black, with the hugest of lips, stalks before poor Pompey Nolegs, and they can rest at Esty's shop on Newbury Street, to indulge in a Barmecide feast of hot clam soup, while he perhaps will drum for them on their march to Judith Jaquish, the woman of divers gifts, parasol-coverer, shoe-binder, fresco-painter, and performer on a violoncello made in part by her own skillful hands. Her paintings on the side of the staircase, of cats, dogs, and lambs,

were only preliminary to the elaborate decoration of her parlor, which consisted of a red brick mansion, an orange tree in full bearing, a row of three monkeys, and a female at the door of the house blowing a horn. The legend as it dropped from her lips was as follows : " You see one of the monkeys has gone to the tree to steal oranges ; the others were sent to bring him back, but as they seem to be as bad as he is ; the woman is tooting for help." She once told some visitors that she had been shingling the roof, and did not call it very hard work. If she were in a gracious mood, she would play them a tune, but if she chanced to be in a less happy frame of mind, the sooner they departed the better ; and I dare say that she was often subjected to thoughtless impertinence, or what seemed to her to be such.

*Pictures that
speak for
themselves.*

The poet, Billy Cook, died many years ago, leaving the rich legacy of his extraordinary works to Salem, which let us hope was the birthplace of so rare a genius. He united three accomplishments in concocting his volumes : he wrote the poems, illustrated them, did the printing, and in order to make a literal press sat upon it himself. The composition was unique, the pictures

were beyond criticism, and the printing was only excelled by the "Riverside." Salem has produced several poets, but there can be only one Billy Cook!

Fire! Fire!

A friend who in boyhood availed himself of every chance to go to a fire has furnished some items by which a record of the efficient aid given by the amateur firemen forty or fifty years ago may fill a page of Odds and Ends.

The "silk stockings" of Chestnut, Essex, and some neighboring streets often did good service with engine Pennsylvania, in spite of the silken hose, that did not prevent a skillful management of the leathern hose, which was pulled and pushed, as was also the engine, by the united efforts of one horse at the end of a long rope and as many hands as could catch hold of it, besides two men at the poles. But the exploits in the lower part of the town, being under personal observation, can be more thoroughly described. At the first stroke of the bell, the "wide awakes" ran to their respective engine-houses with buckets on arm, long bag slung over the shoulder, and hands at liberty to run out the engine, seize the rope, and do all the dragging until a horse was brought to help them. The

Rapid once went in great style to Marblehead, manned by two lads of sixteen, who unlocked the engine-house door, got the engine and hose-cart out, and pulled their best until the customary horse made his appearance ; then they raced four miles to the fire, where the requisite force of men was found, and after the flames were extinguished, they were hospitably invited to the town hall to smoke a long nine and drink a little New England rum — let us hope that it was very little.

A town always noted for hospitality.

A good deal of agility was needed to escape the inevitable risks, and a tremendous amount of strength has been expended by a man on the pole to keep the engine from sliding forward and bringing destruction in its train. The scene of action once reached, a line was speedily formed, buckets of water passed to fill the engine, and not infrequently a cheek was scorched by the heat while the opposite ear was frozen by intense cold. No trained fireman could have worked more fearlessly than these volunteers. Regardless of danger, they would dive in and out of a burning house, and one of the number, who could not resist the entreaties of a poor old woman, ran up-stairs to bring down her

Bible and molasses jug with a not very choice collection of articles huddled together in the long bag.

*The honest
truth.*

All honor is their due for ready and cheerful services, but the honest truth is that they liked the fun, and an Indian war-whoop would hardly have made night more hideous than the shouts of "Fire!" ringing on the air, the louder the better, except for those who had to stay at home and hear them. Steam-engines with a well-paid fire department are a signal triumph of new times over the old.





My pleasant task is ended, and I now dedicate this little book to the friends who remain in the Old Home, and those who have sought what perhaps they may never have found, — a better place to live in. I have “looked up the Old Mother,” and have listened to her stories, by which a few years over half a century have been illustrated, and now there is nothing more to say, except the word that sooner or later must be said by all,

GOOD-BY.

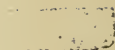




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